

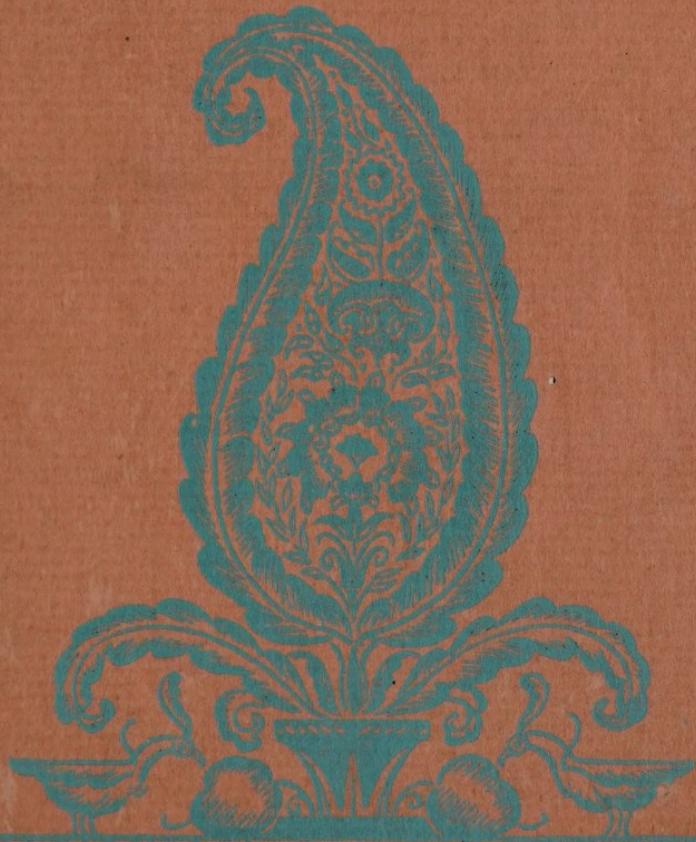
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Dinabandhu





# DINABANDHU

## A BACKGROUND BOOK ON INDIA



RUTH ISABEL SEABURY



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E. V. Chrustowsky

November, 1975

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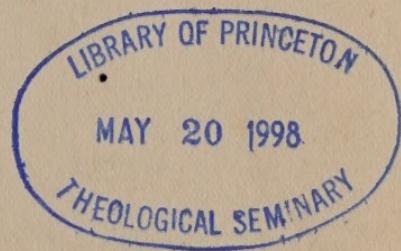
*Dinabandhu: A Background Book on India*



*By Ruth Isabel Seabury*

# DINABANDHU

A Background Book  
on India



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## FOREWORD

*How Do You Dare to Write It?*

*Or, The Author Talks to Herself*

Y

OU'RE JUST LIKE ALL THE REST OF THEM, AREN'T YOU?" said myself to me, sarcastically. "Can't keep from writing a book that will tell the world all about India after a three months' visit."

"I know," said I to myself. "Certainly that is what everybody will think, and I always vowed I wouldn't do it, yet here I am."

"How do you dare to do it?" said myself. "Think what a big country it is. Think how many people have written it up. Think how many mistakes they have made; how much hard feeling they have caused. Why should you think you could do it any better? Some authors have lived a whole lifetime there and still admit they have not told the whole story."

"Well, there you are," said I to myself. "Even a lifetime is not enough, as you just said. And all I am trying to do is to share my enthusiasm and love for India. I have studied her for years and I have read thousands of letters and literally hundreds of books. Then, I have friends there—Indian, American, and English."

"I know," said myself to me, doubtfully, "that is all true and perhaps you can get people to see that."

"Well, anyway," said I to myself, "this is not to be an original work of personal impressions and opinions. *This* is a source book."

"What is a source book?" said myself to me.

"A source book," said I, "is a short cut for leaders. Once, before I went to India, I had to teach an eight weeks' course on that vast country. How I studied, haunted the libraries in Cambridge and Boston, scoured the records of my board! It was lots of fun, but I kept thinking to myself, What does a leader do who cannot go to so many libraries, who cannot telephone to six missionaries within ten minutes and arrange in one day to see them all, who hasn't a list of ten or fifteen Indian friends to whom to write? So this book attempts to draw out of all those sources available to me the things that such leaders cannot find, to which they have no access, and to retell long and authoritative works in a few paragraphs. 'Here is India,' I shall say to American youth. 'She is wonderful and complex and puzzling. She would repay a lifetime of study and many visits, but here she is just introduced to you. You need her and she needs you.'"

"I begin to see," said myself to me. "In that case, as a teller of tales and interpreter of useful knowledge, perhaps you can qualify."

R. I. S.

*Boston, Massachusetts*

*March, 1938*

## CHAPTER ONE

### *Dinabandhu Introduces Himself*

WENT TO ONE WHO HAD KNOWN INDIA AND LIVED THERE many years. "Give me a word," said I to him, "that will express 'brother' in one of the languages of India. I don't want a blood brother and I don't want anything as intangible as a friend. You might call him a bond brother, the person to whom you could show your worst and your best, to whom you could open your heart and be sure of sympathy. He would love you for what you are and for what you could be and what you are becoming. It would be a word with no one equivalent in English."

"I have just the word for you," said my friend. "Dinabandhu.<sup>1</sup> There is a word like that, though spelled variously, in almost all the languages of India—my 'brother'—not born of the same family or even in the same town, but still my brother. I can look up to him and yet he can give me gifts I otherwise could never have. Yes, that is the word—Dinabandhu—my brother."

So that word I have chosen as the symbol for our Indian brothers and sisters and especially for that strong young group that represents the India of tomorrow.

"Isn't it wonderful," said an Indian boy to me, "that though

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced *deen-uh-bund'hoo*.

we live so far apart and in such different ways, we can be brothers together and in our brotherhood change the world?"

"I hate to go back to India," said one Indian student who had just finished his college work and received his graduate degree in America. "I love my country; and I will have much to do for her. I know that. But it's been so wonderful to be with the young people of America, to feel a part of their movement and their life. Why, just in the summer conferences I have made many friends, more than friends, too—they even called me 'Uncle Jimmy,' some of them. I hate to break that tie. I don't want them to forget me."

So young India feels and speaks. But so with young America, too. In the United Christian Youth Movement of North America young people of churches all over the country have been thinking in a new way about the kingdom of God or that Christian world community which Jesus interpreted so constantly and for the ideal of which he gave his life. We have even talked about "building a new world," but many a person here and there within the Movement fears that we in America are in danger of thinking that our group is the whole world; that what we determine and vote and the action that we take on peace and social justice and religion can of itself change the world. Sometimes it has seemed as if the Christian Youth Movement of North America lived in a little world of its own, even while being stimulated, inspired, and thrilled by a Kagawa or a T. Z. Koo. It has had little conception of that fellowship consisting of many small handfuls of young Christians in other lands. We ought now to think of "Christian youth building a new world" in terms of the Christian youth of *all* the world.

So the Dinabandhu of this book represents the Christian fellowship in India—young, eager, able, strong, often oppressed by a feeling of being scattered and immature, yet often conscious, too, of its own power. Dinabandhu here is the expression in concrete form of that fellowship—a composite personality. In a Christian young people's conference in India he would be just an average young person in a position of leadership trying to find the way of Jesus for his land. When the Christian Youth Movement of the World meets, he would be young India's representative. If we had a summer conference with delegates from all lands, he might represent the high school youth of India or her young college men and women.

In your summer conference he would be constantly interpreting his own land. You and I would be seeing India through his eyes. So in this book, as we look at geography and history and politics and economics, it will be through the eyes of a young Christian, a member of our own fellowship—the fellowship of Christian youth building a new world.

It would make it easier, perhaps, if we could see what he looks like, this Dinabandhu, our composite Indian. He is of medium stature, some five feet eight inches in height; slender and wiry, swift of motion, his fluent and expressive hands in constant gesture helping out his conversation. His hair is straight and black and shiny; his dark eyes seem to be all pupil. His skin is a light brown. His dress here in our midst would be the dress of any young man in the colleges or high schools of America. We might find him a bit too well dressed most of the time, for he would not take easily to informality of costume. This Western dress sits too newly upon him for him to be informal about it. We know by watching him that

he is more used to the comfortable dress of his own people, with the loosely draped, skirt-like nether garment and the comfortable shirt suited to the tropical climate. His carriage is erect and graceful, and we somehow sense the fact that he is used to a turban carried somewhat regally upon his head, or a gay embroidered cap, instead of the drab headgear of our land. Neither voice nor manner has anything of the languor of the tropics of which we have heard. But I will let him introduce himself.

"I belong to a very old family," he will say. "We have traced our family tree back till it was lost in antiquity. From the time I was born I have been brought up on the stories and achievements of our clan or caste. Tonight I shall talk to you here around the campfire about my mother land. I am a citizen of no mean country, as St. Paul would say. I am proud of her. It makes me a bit homesick even to talk about her. I close my eyes and see her loveliness. I can see her lovely harbors, the closeness of the night sky where the stars seem so much nearer to man's hand than here in the West, the brilliance and richness of birds' and flowers and the far greater luxuriance of her growth. Your country, I confess, though it is beautiful in many places, especially in a place like this, is a bit dull to one who has lived in India."

"I wish I might make you see the gay pageant which life presents in my land; the natural beauty of the tropics where, for a short season at least, everything comes alive to a more expressive gaiety, a more brilliant coloring, a more exotic hue. A party in my country is so much more exciting than a party in yours. A parade is so much more colorful; just everyday life in the village bazaar offers something to the eye that you

can never find in a street of shops here, no matter how gay they may be. As for a mere man, I look down at these navy blue clothes I wear and the tiny little bit of color in a necktie, and I remember my land where man can take on as much color as he pleases—turban and sash and scarf. Even skin is more interesting in India. Someone has said that brown is a much less naked color than white, and I know just what he meant. Yes, my country is a lovely land, a delight to remember with the mind's eye.

"But she is a land that I can feel proud of, too. No other country in the world is older than mine. Five thousand years of history we are sure of, and we know that there must have been civilization there even before that. Have you heard about the recent discoveries made in Sind? They have brought to light some astonishing proofs of India's antiquity. It had always been supposed that civilization really began in India at approximately 1800 B.C., but about 1925 an Indian archaeologist examining a Buddhist shrine found in the rubbish at his feet some little seals the like of which had never been seen in India before, though they resembled others found in Persia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. Today, as a result of scientific exploration, two great buried cities lie open to the sunlight in western India, in regions now sparsely populated.

"Five thousand years ago there must have lived here a great people whose cities were built on the modern American model in rectangular blocks. The houses were, many of them, of two stories, built after careful planning. There are some evidences that there may even have been apartments or tenements. The system of sanitation is amazing to us now. Every house seems to have had a bathroom. There were drain pipes of pottery

built into the walls, leading down to carefully tiled conduits in the streets.

"There were shops and taverns, work rooms belonging to dyers and potters, evidences even of the use of cotton goods, for a precious fragment of cloth has still survived. Copper, gold, and silver were in use, and pottery running all the way from very crude hand-rounded vessels through the most beautiful polychrome ware of delicate manufacture. For the children there were birds that whistled, animals that went on wheels, a bull that could wag his head. There was even script, and, though so far we have not been able to decipher it, it seems to belong to the same family as the cuneiform which has been found in other places. So India takes her place among the oldest nations in the world, with Egypt and Persia and the land from which Abraham journeyed.

"I suppose you might think I was boasting if I listed for you my country's claims to greatness; but you may perhaps forgive me, for I am surrounded all the time by evidences of the greatness and speed and size and efficiency of America. Well, India has something to boast about, too. It is a country of great riches. One of the first Moslem invaders recorded in an inventory the tribute he received from the Hindu ruler whom he conquered: twenty-four tons of pearls, and a hundred and sixty pounds of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones. India supplied the whole world with diamonds up to the time when the mines were opened in Brazil in 1728. From the mines of Golconda have come nearly all the most famous diamonds of history.

"At the very dawn of recorded history the fame of 'Ind' and its wealth was sung in all the capitals of the world. Wars were

fought for its trade in gold and silver, silk, spices, drugs, tea and rare woods. The courts of Syria and Egypt and later of Europe were rich in the goods of India. It was to find an easier means of access to those treasures that Christopher Columbus ventured forth in the quest which eventually brought to light this land of America. Still seeking a passage to India, Vasco da Gama eventually rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Nor is all that trade a thing of the past, for today India ranks fifth in the trade of the world.

"India has the most beautiful building in the world—the Taj Mahal. But that isn't her only work of architectural greatness. Her palaces and temples, her forts and even her homes, abound in beauty. The Maharajah's palace in the state of Patiala is a quarter of a mile long, the terrace of which, running the entire length, is all of marble. That is but one sample. The distinctive feature of Indian architecture is its delicacy and its beauty of detail. Marble walls are inlaid with precious stones. Traceries are so delicate that they look as if they had been worked in the most pliable of soft metal, yet they are actually hewn out of marble or wrought in iron.

"She has a wealth of paintings and literature, too. Some of the earliest literature in the world is to be found in Indian hymns of the Rig-Veda, compiled between 1500 and 1000 B.C. but sung even today.

"India has the highest mountains in the world—the Himalayas, with Mount Everest, the dream of every mountain climber, still unconquered by man.

"I come as no mendicant when I come from India, for my land gives as much as it gets. Your own country would feel a severe loss if its trade with India were abolished. More than

fifty million dollars' worth of goods each year finds its way from my land into yours. Black tea, pepper, sheep and goat skins, cotton and wool and jute in the raw, gunny sacks and gunny cloth, rubber, manganese, pig iron, castor beans, shellac—these are some of the products that you buy from us.

"But you sell plenty to us, too, and, interestingly enough, recent records show that the imports and exports are almost balanced. You sell to us boots and shoes, piece goods, stationery, clothing, tires, kerosene and lubricating oils, galvanized iron, metal plates, all kinds of hardware, and machinery both electrical and mining. We buy more and more motor cars, including taxis and buses, and all sorts of miscellaneous provisions for our stores. There will be still more trade in the future, too, between our lands if all goes well, for India's standard of living is far lower than it should be, as we shall see, and when her many millions of people are able to use the goods you can provide, there will be an endless opportunity for exports.

"For India is a land of multitudes. I feel helpless as I try to get across to you the huge size of my country. One-sixth and more of the world's population lives within her boundaries. Two of the twenty-five largest cities in the world, with over a million population, are in India: Calcutta and Bombay—the former about the size of Detroit, the latter with a population about equal to that of Los Angeles. India's huge population of 352,000,000, nearly three times the size of the population of the United States, is crowded into a country a third smaller than yours. And of that vast population, nearly nine-tenths live in villages.

"How can I picture my country to you when she is so big

and so complex? Within her borders are seven hundred different provinces and states, as against your forty-eight, though some of ours are tiny ones. I learned yours once, but it would take you a long time to learn ours. One writer has said: 'China guesses at her population. India every ten years gives the exact figures in the greatest piece of census-taking that the world knows anything about.'

"To make it still more confusing, my land is a land of tremendous contrasts. Its southern tip nearly reaches the equator, while the mountains of its northern borders are clad with ice and snow. In the growing season its plains are a beautiful green with waving crops, but when the hot season comes, the ground is baked to a dull brown almost like a desert.

"India has the richest man in the world—the Nizam of Hyderabad—and other powerful Indian princes with fabulous fortunes. Yet the average per capita income of her population is only about forty dollars a year.

"She has the most crowded city in the world—Bombay—where there are more than nine hundred people to the square mile; but she has also one of the world's most sparsely inhabited regions, in Baluchistan, with six people to the square mile.

"Indian hill tribes living on a very primitive level are to be found within an hour's ride of centers of high culture. In the streets the Ford and the Rolls-Royce run alongside ox carts whose dark-skinned drivers ride the tongue of the vehicle and twist the oxen's tails for speed. You walk down a prosperous city street peering in the windows of fashionable shops full of the latest in gadgets and frocks, carrying everything from rare books to razor blades; but you watch your step lest you should bump into a sacred cow, or a holy man sitting detached from

the world's crowd, whose only clothing may be the ashes he has smeared upon his body.

"Some of the finest intellectual and spiritual leaders of the world are produced in India; yet the illiteracy of that land is appalling, for ninety per cent of the people can neither read nor write in any language.

"So you see," says Dinabandhu, "I am not boasting. I would have you see the sad side, too, just as I have seen the sad side of your land. My country, too, is a land of opportunity where much will have to be changed before it can be called God's country, and where the hearts of men will have to be softened with love before the kingdom of God can come. But for every one of you I could find an Indian friend whose talents and abilities, whose interests and whose knowledge, whose learning and whose training, correspond to yours. Do you like sports? Well, I can find you athletes in my country, to play a swift game of tennis or to teach you badminton; to compete with you in football, though many of them would prefer cricket; and to share with you some of the swift, hard games that are native to India.

"Is your line science? India, too, has thousands of young people in her laboratories. Are you interested in law? For the past three thousand years there have been lawyers in India, and the intricacies of present commercial law open before them great fields of opportunity. Is art your hobby? I can show you some of the moderns of India whose paintings you will find delightful. They will take you to some of the loveliest spots in the world where together you can sit and sketch or paint. If you are preparing for the silk or metal industries, for salesmanship, or for the field of invention, for all of these I can

find you partners. If your line is sociology or psychology, I can show you some of our great leaders in those fields, as they try to solve the problems of criminal tribes and depressed classes and to adjust the psychology of a vast population with conflicting interests, hopes, desires, and traditions.

"I can even find Christians in all these lines, or nearly all, for today our Christian fellowship is contributing educated leaders for all India. If you will come to our conferences, perhaps we shall discuss the very same things you also like to study. Young Christians in my land are working on the liquor problem, on the creation of a new standard of home life, on a better use of leisure time, on the racial problem and the caste problem, on the way of securing justice for all men of all classes, on the making of peace instead of the destructive futility of war. They are interested in religion just as you are, and as their fathers before them down many thousands of years. India is supremely religious, and the young Christian today is trying to find the good in the faith of his fathers and to fulfill it and make it useful in the way of Jesus, until the kingdom of God may come in India also.

"Ah, India! I love her with a passionate devotion. I would so gladly give my life for her, yet she is one of the most tragic countries on God's earth. I hope if you come to see her, you will see her glory and her misery, her beauty and her sordidness, the wonder of her personalities, and the greatness of her future. I hope you will love her as I have come to love your land, and that we may be truly brothers."

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Dinabandhu Takes the Pointer*

YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN MY COUNTRY WITHOUT A MAP," SAYS Dinabandhu, as he comes to our conference round table for the second time. "Our history and geography are very closely intertwined. First, let's look at the map of the world. Here you see India, a vast sub-continent in the southern part of Asia, its northeast border lying against Tibet. At the very top left is the Northwest Frontier facing Afghanistan. To the west is Persia, now known by its ancient name of Iran; on the east Burma, which up to 1937 was a province of India but now has a separate government.

"If you look at a map of India alone, you see that the land is marked clearly by mountains and rivers. Just inside the coasts of the peninsula and almost parallel to them, you find ranges of mountains. The range on the western side, known as the Western Ghats, is one of the most interesting mountain formations of the world, and often called the backbone of India. The ridge rises to a great height, eight thousand feet at one point, and extends like an unbroken wall, cut through here and there by rivers. From the Western Ghats the whole country of India slopes eastward, its rivers flowing clear across, and most of them emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The eastern mountains are really hills averaging less than one thousand

feet and broken off into a ragged, saw-tooth formation by many rivers large and small. An irregular mountain range cuts off the ocean-bound peninsula of South India from the northern half of the country. Far to the northwest is India's gateway, the Khyber Pass. It is one of the few breaks in the northern mountains through which entrance by land is possible. But it is in such forbidding country and so narrow that it has been comparatively easy to defend this point against invaders, and to this day it is fortified and maintained by military power against sudden attack.

"Volumes have been written of the beauty, the massiveness, the inaccessibility of those mountains—the Himalayas, the 'Roof of the World.' Men have given their lives in attempt after attempt to scale Kinchinjunga and Mt. Everest.

"Almost any extreme of climate known either to the tropics or the temperate zone can be found in my India. In most of the country, however, there are three seasons: the hot season, the cool season, and the 'rains.' South India's oceanic climate gives an almost constant temperature the whole year round. Mark Twain, on visiting South India, you may recall, said of her seasons: 'In the summertime it is hot enough to melt a brass doorknob, and in the winter it only makes it mushy.'

"India's geography is very simple to learn, for the country divides into three distinct sections. First there are the mountains, as we have seen. Then the northern plains, a region of rich cultivation, extending from the delta of the Indus along the valley of the Ganges and down to the Bay of Bengal. This section was originally called Hindustan, or 'The Land of the Indus,' and from it came the name India, which Western nations applied to the whole country. It seems, indeed, to lie in

the arms of the two great rivers, the Indus and the Brahmaputra, and over vast stretches its soil contains not one stone, not even a pebble. The third section is, of course, the peninsula proper, with its interior plateau and coastal plains. It is called the Deccan, which means south, and includes rough hills, dense forests, tall jungle grass, as well as fertile and highly cultivated regions both on the plateau and along the coasts.

"But the history of my land is not so simple, for it stretches so far back into the past and has to do with the rise and fall of so many different peoples. The geography and history together make one story of what I believe you will agree is a great people—my people. I hope you will love them and that you will see in them brothers who work with you for a new world."

#### *The Beginnings of Indian People*

As Dinabandhu has hinted, the most thrilling and varied thing about India is not her land but her men. Their origin is surrounded with mystery and romance. There is no study more interesting than the painstaking investigation made by scientists today to find out how our human family began. Every American school child is taught in his social sciences all that is so far known of the palæolithic and neolithic men and of that mist-shrouded period up to 5000 B.C. It surprises us to realize that the little period we ourselves know most about, from the beginning of what is called the Christian era, is really only about one-twentieth of the history of mankind's movements upon the earth.

In those centuries before recorded history began the peoples of the world were largely nomadic tribesmen moving from place to place in search of adequate food. We can picture

those tribes suddenly pausing on a rocky plateau and seeing below them a green and fertile valley with fruit trees and vines, a land, to use the old biblical phrase, "flowing with milk and honey." Into those particularly favored spots they would descend with their flocks and herds, and remain to develop agriculture, and later permanent community civilization with settlements and cities.

By 3000 B.C. there were probably already six such well defined civilizations. One of them was in India, apparently centered in the fertile valley of the Indus. The cities of that civilization disappeared—destroyed, perhaps, by barbarous invading tribes—and remained buried for thousands of years. Possession of the land of Ind was for centuries thereafter in the hands of the tribesmen, ancestors of the people living in South India today and known to us as Dravidians.

At some time in that pre-historic period there had developed, probably far to the north of the Caspian and Black seas, several groups of tribes which have come to be known as Aryans, meaning in Sanskrit "superior people." In their wanderings in search of unoccupied territory some of their many tribes eventually made their way down through the Khyber Pass and around 2000 B.C., so the historians say, appeared in upper India—that is, some four thousand years ago.

Historians are tempted to guess that the Aryan wave came from the country between the Danube and the Oxus rivers (the country that is now Russia) and that many tribes from the same homeland migrated from that cooler, harder climate, some to the western parts of Europe, others into the Mediterranean area, and still others down into Persia and India. Sanskrit, the language which these Aryan invaders developed

in India, has many words like those of the Greek, Latin, and Persian languages, and is of the same language family as modern Lithuanian.

### *The Aryans Come Over the Pass*

The Aryans continued to come through the northern passes, one group after another, rather like a succession of tidal waves. Eventually they came to be known as Indo-Aryans. They spoke of the aborigines whom they found on the plains of the Indus as "noseless people," of their heads as curly and their skin as black. The aborigines lived by hunting and warfare; whereas the Aryan invaders brought with them herds of cattle and became agriculturists. The cow, even back in those days, was to the Indo-Aryan the measure of wealth. The value of a man's life or that of his slave, the cost of a gold necklace, all were measured in terms of so many cows. The cows furnished milk for food, leather for garments and utensils; they dragged the plows and were the burden bearers. Sheep were also extensively raised, and the wool was used for clothing.

Much of the Aryans' time, however, was taken up with the excitement of war. Their various chiefs fought with each other or against the more primitive tribes for power or for more land. Their warfare reminds us very much of the ancient Greeks and the description of the Trojan War given in Homer's Iliad, a war which perhaps occurred at about the same period in history. Even the description of their tribal gods is strikingly similar. In Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt, we can easily see the Zeus of whom the Greek poets sang.

How do we know all this? Probably between 1500 and 1000 B.C. there were compiled the very earliest records of Indian history. These records were in the form of hymns of praise and religious forms and today are to be found in collections called the Vedas, of which the Rig-Veda is the most important. There are in the Rig-Veda a thousand ancient hymns. They were composed and sung by the priests, never written down, but memorized and handed on from ear to ear and mouth to mouth, generation after generation.

### *Centuries of Light and Shadow*

By about 600 B.C. the Aryans had spread to most of India. The warrior chieftains had become kings or rulers of some sixteen little kingdoms, or Aryan states. Industry and commerce were growing. Gold instead of cows was now the medium of exchange, but the cow had become a religious symbol of well-being and fertility. The Aryan religion, introduced in the form of tribal gods and blended somewhat with the ideas of the Dravidians, had developed into a carefully worked out and very complex religion which was known as Brahmanism and from which has evolved what we call Hinduism today. In a later chapter we shall learn the main ideas of this religion, which has so profoundly influenced the lives of India's countless millions.

The history of India from 600 B.C., like the history of every other people, is one of ups and downs—periods of dark shadow thrown by war and barbarism, and periods of light when for a time some great and significant personality led the people forward. The story is usually told as if India were the northern and central part of the country only, for very unsatisfac-

tory records survive of what we know as South India, though it had a history and character of its own. We know that there were little kingdoms, many of which were extremely wealthy; that the muslin and silk of their manufacture, the ivory, spices, pearls, and precious stones which they produced, were highly prized in other lands. The ships of Tarshish brought to Solomon's court in Old Testament days "ivory, apes, and peacocks" from South India.

In general, India's story is one of many conquests, for the early Aryans were followed at intervals through the centuries by foreign invaders who came by land and sea, not so much to occupy and settle as to extend their empires.

So the saga of India can be told in a list of great events and decisive conquests, but it must be given also in personalities and movements which have influenced the life of mankind. It is easy to summarize the former; to understand the latter would take years of study.

### *Two Thousand Years of Conquest*

Reduced to its barest outline, a summary of India's history may be developed around the following significant dates.

500 B.C. Darius the Great of Persia conquered the border lands of the north, levying great tribute.

326 B.C. Alexander the Great of Greece captured Persia's holdings and pressed forward in bloody conquest, leaving garrisons which later became cities, and Greek names and remains. His chief accomplishment was to open the doorway for trade between India and Asia Minor, and so for exchange of cultural influences.

321 B.C. Chandragupta, an Aryan chief, became head of the first extensive empire in India's history, establishing the so-called Maurya dynasty. In 302 B.C. he defeated Alexander's best general, Seleucus, and married his daughter. He built roads which have lasted to this day. Records tell of hospitals established, wells dug, postal and police service, irrigation, and the beginnings of an intricate civilization.

273 B.C. Asoka, grandson of Chandragupta, spread his empire almost to the southern tip of India and brought the country into further contact with the outside world.

230-100 B.C. Barbarian tribes, Parthians and Scythians, attacked and conquered India, which had crumbled after the death of Asoka. It was a dark age of barbarian control.

100 B.C.-A.D. 100. Commercial life developed between India and the outside world, especially the Roman Empire.

A.D. 320. A new Chandragupta ushered in the Golden Age of India, under a dynasty of Hindu emperors known as the Guptas.

470. The so-called White Huns, nomads from Central Asia like those under Attila the Great in Europe, spread their menace into India, and for over two centuries groups of Mongols swept in with pillage, waste, and slaughter.

1001. Mahmud of Ghazni began the first of the great Moslem invasions. For seven centuries India was virtually dominated by Moslem rule.

1206. Kutb-ud-din became the first Moslem sultan of Delhi. After two hundred years this earliest Moslem empire fell apart again into many states or kingdoms.

1498. Vasco da Gama discovered the ocean route to India, and established trade with Portugal.

1525. Baber, a Mongol prince from Central Asia, led an invasion into India, becoming the first of the Mogul (Mongol) emperors, who remained the dominant rulers until the eighteenth century.
1602. The Dutch captured the Portuguese possessions in India and organized their ports for trade.
1608. A small band of Englishmen under Captain Hawkins opened trade, and their immediate successors established the first trading post on Indian soil.
- 1658-1707. Aurangzeb, the Throne Adorner, lost much of the Mogul Empire in the Hindu revolt organized by Sivaji, the Mahratta, the head of a strong Hindu kingdom which threw off the yoke of the Moslems.
- 1686-1757. The English, who had organized the East India Company in 1600 and acquired Bombay and Madras, in this period extended their control over large sections of India, and made Calcutta the capital of a commercial empire, winning over their only real rivals, the French, by diplomacy and war.
1858. The British Crown and British government took over the government of India. In 1877 Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. The capital was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911.

#### *Princes and Prophets of the Past*

But we said above that the dates and events of India's history are less than half the story, and that the personalities and movements which those thousands of years represent are even more significant. Only a few can be mentioned here.

H. G. Wells lists among the six greatest men of the world

Gautama, a young Indian nobleman of the sixth century B.C., whose followers, even today, number in the millions. We know him as Buddha. This boy, son of a rajah, was born to riches and power, but was so sensitive to the suffering of others that he became at a very early age depressed and saddened by life about him. He walked less and less in company with his own crowd of lively young nobles; and remained alone to reflect on the problem of human life and its bondage.

When he was thirty, at the very hour of a great feast to celebrate the birthday of his only son, Gautama suddenly disappeared. For seven years he lived the life of an ascetic, wearing a beggar's rags, and listening humbly to all that the Brahman priests could tell him, but always unsatisfied. At last one day, seated under the shadow of a great *banyan*, or *bo*, tree, he suddenly had a revelation of the right path to happiness.

For the next forty-five years he went up and down the country among the people, preaching a new religion. His followers gave him the name Buddha, "one who has found wisdom," and to this day his religion is called Buddhism, "The Way of Wisdom." The essence of Gautama's belief is summed up in what he called the Four Noble Truths: first, that life is bound to be full of sorrow and pain; second, that sorrow and pain come from our own desires; third, that they can be escaped only by ceasing to desire; and fourth, that Nirvana, or the absence of desire, may be achieved by following the Eight-fold Path: right belief, right resolution, right speech, right behavior, right occupation, right effort, right contemplation, and right concentration.

It was not until long after the death of Gautama the Buddha that his followers in the various lands of the Orient to which

his influence had spread began to think of him as a divine being and worked out almost as elaborate a worship of him as the one from which he sought escape.

Among the greatest of the followers of Buddha was the emperor Asoka, who inherited the empire which Chandragupta built. Following the cruel precedent of his grandfather, he began his reign by starting a war against the neighboring kingdom. But Asoka was a Buddhist, and an inscription which survives to this day, carved on stone, records how it was suddenly revealed to him that conquest "involves the slaughter, death, and carrying away captive of the people, the killing of 100,000, the enslaving of 150,000." From that day on Asoka renounced war. Perhaps he was the first king in history to discover peace as a better way of settling international disputes. "True conquest," he said on the same tablet, "is spiritual"; and to this day Asoka is remembered for his spiritual conquests.

Believing that Buddhism gave the ideal way of life, he ordered religious messages to be carved upon rocks and pillars, and sent heralds to urge his people to study the truths of Buddha and to follow the path of duty. He built monasteries, and erected statues of Buddha, sent his brother and sister as missionaries to the island of Ceylon, which to this day is largely Buddhist, and others to Tibet, Burma, Persia, Egypt, and Greece. As a result of these and later missions, not only was Buddhism spread through southern and eastern Asia, but India came into more intimate commercial and cultural contact with the outside world.

After a long period of distressing conquest, dark ages of barbarism, and the beginnings of a new commercial contact with

the rest of the world, a new Chandragupta emerged in A.D. 320. He and his successors gave India what is sometimes called its "Golden Age," though it reminds us somewhat of the nationalism of Adolf Hitler. Chandragupta revived the old Sanskrit, the language of literature; restored the religion of Hinduism; and banished Buddhism and the Buddhists, who migrated to China, Japan, Burma, and Ceylon, in which lands Buddhism is still strong today, whereas there are few Buddhists left in the land of Buddha.

The Guptas, as the rulers of that dynasty were called, gathered about them the "Nine Jewels," learned men, the brightest of whom seems to have been Kalidas, the poet. In the court of that day science, art, and architecture flourished.

The Indian Nationalist of the twentieth century likes to think of those "good old days" before the barbarians, or the Moslems, or the white Westerners came, as the real heyday of India, and of its true Hindu rule, now for many centuries interrupted.

Dinabandhu will tell us, as he stands before us, pointer in hand, that he is a pure Aryan, belonging to the same race as ours, but that he is truly Indian and proud of the heroes of India's long past, whom every Indian schoolboy is taught to know and revere and love. Yet he will end his tale by saying that as a Christian Indian he can glory in the church which came to India even before the Golden Age, a church founded long before any Christian had lived in England or America. "And that's another story," as we shall see.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *He Shows Us India's Historic Shrines*

ONE DAY DINABANDHU'S UNCLE, A BUSINESS MAN TRAVELING in the interests of his firm, took the boy on a trip with him. "For," said he, "you really should see your own country."

Dinabandhu had a most exciting month of travel. He returned full of patriotic enthusiasm at the beauty and variety of his own land and eager to tell everyone about it. When school opened he took back with him all the pictures he had bought on the journey and the snapshots he had himself taken with the little camera his father gave him before he left home.

When the current history teacher asked him to speak to the class on the outstanding points of his trip, he went through all his pictures most carefully to pick the right ones as the basis for his lecture. Suddenly he was struck with astonishment as he realized that of the twenty-five pictures he had selected to represent the glory of India, two-thirds at least were pictures of temples, mosques, shrines, churches.

He thought it over and decided to make that the basis of his speech, for after all religion had made his country great. Each period of history had brought into being at least one great religious movement. Though the kings and soldiers had,

many of them, passed away to be forgotten, the religions lived on. When one visited the historic marvels of India, one saw the Pearl Mosque at Agra, the great mosque at Delhi, the Hindu shrines of Benares and the towering *gopurams* of South India, the Buddhist Caves of Ajanta in western India, the Parsee Towers of Silence in Bombay, and the ancient and beautiful Christian churches and tomb at Goa, where Francis Xavier began his great missionary service back in 1542 and where he lies buried in a silver coffin.

"Every religion," he said to his classmates, "represents man's search for God, and in that search India has grown great."

If we look at India's history as Dinabandhu was suddenly led to see it we can easily realize what he meant. In the last chapter we discovered how closely India's religion was connected with its history and we followed the growth of its greatest religion, Hinduism. We saw the great reform movement within it begun by Gautama Buddha, and later developed into a separate system. We might have seen other movements such as that under the prophet Mahavira, who, influenced by Buddha, created the sect known today as the Jains. Yet all that is really a part of Hinduism.

Now a glance at our historical summary will show us that shortly after the "Golden Age" new races and religions made their appearance on the Indian stage. From then on began the conflict or contact of one religion with another.

### *The Parsees*

The period following the reign of the Guptas is often called the "Dark Age" because of the incessant wars between small Indian kingdoms and the invasion of barbarians. Yet during

this dark age the Parsees came to India. Persia at the height of its power had developed the religion of Zoroaster, or the worship of Ahura Mazda, the wise Lord, who revealed to the young man Zoroaster teachings which he wrote down in letters of gold on the hides of oxen, just as Moses put down the Ten Commandments from God upon tablets of stone. The holy book was called the Avesta, and Zoroastrianism, as it was named later, became the religion of Persia and was spoken of in other lands as the Persian religion. When the Arabs poured into Persia about A.D. 700, the followers of Zoroaster fled to India, seeking religious freedom. They adopted the language of the people, but influenced the land and history of the country by their commercial success, their educated leadership, and their faith. Eventually they settled in Gujarat, and today are largely concentrated in Bombay.

The Parsees, as they are called, have often been spoken of as the smallest religious community in the world, for to this day they number but little more than a hundred thousand. But they pride themselves on being the last of a mighty race, the only survivors of the great religion of Persia, whose ideals of philanthropy and charity they have passed on to India. They maintain some of the finest social and educational institutions in India, hospitals, dispensaries, and charitable endowments.

### *The First Moslem Invaders*

Who are the Moslems? The story of Mohammed, the Arab founder of his faith, will be told in a later chapter; and the belief which he established, one of the great living faiths of today, we shall consider then. It is enough now to remind ourselves that the religion of Mohammed, which began as a tribal

Arab religion, had already by A.D. 740 swept over Western Asia, across North Africa and into Spain. We have often called his religion Mohammedanism, but the people who profess that faith call it Islam, which means "the religion of surrender to God," and themselves Moslems, "the people who have surrendered to God." The world of that day fell before them.

What happened in India? As early as the eighth century Moslem Arabs made raids into India, but beginning in 1001 Mahmud of Ghazni led an army through the Pass, in at least seventeen campaigns. The real conquest of India by the Moslems came when Mohammed Ghori began to establish settlements in India. Out of these grew the sultanate of Delhi, which for centuries was the center of Moslem power.

One of the most interesting of the Delhi sultans was Nasrud-din, a prince of wealth and power, who, however, adopted a standard of poverty, that he might rule his people better. He even made his living by copying manuscripts, and though a king, refused to spend the money of the state on himself. His wife, to whom he was devoted, often remonstrated with him as she toiled alone, without a servant, cooking all the food and doing her work with her own hands. One day while baking bread she burned her fingers badly, and begged her husband to allow her at least one maid. "No," he said, "I cannot. I will not touch the money of the state. That must be spent for the good of the people. The wife of a poor king cannot have a servant."

In the period from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries various Moslem invaders kept coming in from the west—Afghans, Turks, Arabs, Pathans—setting up separate king-

doms and struggling to establish their dynasties in Delhi. Heavy tribute in grain and money was levied by all of them on the Hindus.

One great value came from this era of blood and despotism: the scholarship of India, its mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, and medicine, was taken over by the Moslem conquerors as if it were their own and made available to the world. All Europe began to use figures instead of letters. Although we today call our numerals Arabic, they were really developed by Hindu mathematicians using the Sanskrit language.

### *The Great Moguls*

In 1526 came Baber the Mogul, descendant of Jenghis Khan and Tamerlane—Mongols from Eastern Asia who had gone on a “galloping warpath,” subjugating Turkestan, China, and Persia. They had adopted the Moslem faith, and when later they invaded India, they were known as “Moguls.”

Baber’s autobiography expresses his longings and aims for the development of an empire in India, while old paintings and mosaics give us the story of some of his achievements.

Baber’s grandson, Akbar, was the greatest and best of all the Mogul emperors, ruling wisely for fifty years, and winning the love of Hindus and Moslems alike. Many tales are told of his skill and strength: he walked forty miles a day, could swim and climb mountains, and was the best shot in the country. One contemporary writer tells us: “He eats only once in twenty-four hours, and even then draws back his hand from the dish while he is yet hungry. He drinks only pure water from the Ganges.” He set up in his court a center for the best-known artists, writers, and musicians. He was toler-

ant of other faiths, and tried to construct a kingdom in which all could live together happily.

The result was a fairly well united India for that day. The ideals he represented were carried forward in large measure by his son, Jahangir, the "World Taker," who was as interested in the Hindus as in the Moslems. The interesting story that survives about him is that when he came to the throne he had a "chain of justice" made of gold, sixty feet long, with sixty golden bells on the end, which he hung through a window to the ground below. Anyone who considered he had been treated unjustly in the courts of law could pull the chain, ring the bells, and summon the king.

Jahangir was succeeded by his son, Shah Jahan, the "King of the World," who ruled about the time the Massachusetts Bay Colony was being established in New England. He ought perhaps to have been called "The Builder," for he raised great cities and palaces, tombs, and mosques, and erected many of the finest buildings to be found in India.

Shah Jahan fell in love with Mumtaz Mahal, a beautiful Persian girl visiting at his court, and married her. Theirs was one of the most famous love matches in the world, and they lived happily for fourteen years, when Mumtaz Mahal was stricken very ill. When it was evident that she had not long to live, her husband begged her to tell him what he could do to show his love for her. Perhaps recognizing the greatest work of their reign, Mumtaz begged him to build over her a tomb that would keep her name alive forever. This the shah eagerly promised to do—and how well he kept that promise! For the Taj Mahal, which he built as her tomb, is considered the most beautiful building in all the world.

A poem in marble, it is a fairy-like building which nobody can really describe. Its inlays of black marble and precious stones, its minarets, its delicate details, defy the most skillful pen. But loveliest of all is that distant view from the palace, where the Taj shows in any light with an almost heavenly quality in the clear Indian air, and leaves one breathless at its beauty. It is said that Shah Jahan in his last illness had his bed set up in one of the outer courts where he could look all day across at the tomb of his beautiful queen.

The last of the Moguls, Aurangzeb, a man of real ability and a good administrator, made the mistake of oppressing the Hindus and fanatically promoting his own faith, Islam. In a great Hindu revolt led by Sivaji the Mahratta, he lost most of his power, and died a sad and lonely old man, leaving to his successor the poor remains of the glorious empire of Akbar. By 1750 the Mogul empire was only a name, though to this day there are more Moslems in India than in any other one country of the world.

### *The Christians Come to India*

The story of the coming of Christians to India begins long before the days of Parsees or Moslems. During the reign of Augustus Cæsar, Emperor of Rome, occurred the greatest event in history. Into a highly civilized, skeptical, and comparatively literate world, there was born, among ignorant and illiterate men in a tiny village in an out-of-the-way province of the Roman Empire, one whose life was to change the calendar, the political systems, and the society of all mankind, including that of India.

The world into which Jesus came was prepared for his mes-

sage in three special ways. Roman efficiency had made travel possible; slaves and subject peoples from civilized countries, hating their servitude, were all hungry for a teaching of human brotherhood; and the widespread loss of faith in the old religions made many in a large part of the civilized world ready to hear a teacher whose disciples were so positive and who spoke with such conviction and enthusiasm. To the Christians Jesus was not merely *one* of the gods. He was the only son of the one true God, and, as an observer of that day said, "they listened to no compromise."

Many Indians believe, and students of history are inclined at least partially to agree, that one of Jesus' own disciples, Thomas, the "doubting Thomas" of the Scriptures, landed on the southwest coast of India and told the story of Christ there for the first time. Whether he took a company of Christians with him, or whether, like St. Paul, he traveled alone on a missionary journey, is not certain. At any rate, he is credited with having built seven churches, ordained two pastors, and converted many Brahmins to Christianity.

Through all the centuries of the Christian era, therefore, there have been Christians in India who have called themselves St. Thomas Christians, or Mar Thoma Christians. Their scriptures are in Syriac, the literary language of the Palestine of Jesus' day. According to the belief of this group of Christians, Thomas died in India a martyr, A.D. 58, and the place where he is supposed to have been buried is shown at Mylapore near Madras.

In the year 345 the patriarch of Jerusalem, that is, the head of the Syrian Christian church, sent to the weak and struggling Indian Christians a missionary bishop, many priests, and

seventy families of Christians, providing a strong Syrian influence which shows to this day. When Vasco da Gama landed on the Indian coast after his discovery of the route to India, he found to his surprise the Christian cross already there.

### *Christians of the West*

For over a thousand years no other Christians came to India, and when Christians came again it was unfortunately not as missionaries to share a faith, as did Thomas, but as tradesmen and conquerors. Six years after Columbus, in his search for a trade route to India, had discovered America, Vasco da Gama on the same quest was successful and in 1498 reached the west coast of India. A few years later the fleet of his country, Portugal, sailed into the harbor of the Indian city of Surat, opened fire, and insisted on trading with the people. Against Arab and Indian opposition they built warehouses and docks and established the right of Portugal to trade with India. The viceroy made his capital in Goa, a west coast town which Portugal holds to this day.

Wherever the Portuguese navigators of that day went in the world, they took with them representatives of the Christian church as missionaries. It was their custom to plant the cross, the symbol of the Roman Catholic church, along with the flag of Portugal. Today, partly as a result of Portuguese occupation, there are two million Roman Catholics in India.

The Dutch were soon in the picture, as rivals seeking trade, followed later by the English and the French. So began the race for supremacy among the European powers, who recognized the great value and the tremendous importance of the Indian export trade. The British flag floats over India today

because she won out in that long and terrible struggle between European rivals for the wealth of India. Bitter years of war marked the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

### *The Supremacy of Britain*

Queen Elizabeth, in the year 1600, gave a charter granting exclusive rights for trade with the East Indies on the part of her subjects to what was known as the East India Company, a group of merchants organized in London. The company established posts which became cities, made treaties with the various governments and princes of India, and by the eighteenth century had acquired so much control in India that it established an actual government under a charter from Great Britain, for the idea of government "by the consent of the governed" was still in its beginnings. There were three governors, all agents of the East India Company, established in three great centers—Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, each practically a little nation in itself. This type of rule was in effect for about one hundred years.

Eventually the injustices, corruption, and excesses of which some of the representatives of the company were guilty aroused protests in England. The parliament in London was constantly addressed by Englishmen of sincere interest in human welfare, "men of good conscience," who reported the unfair advantage taken over helpless native princes, the treaties at the mouth of a cannon, the exorbitant rates of taxation, the pillaging by armies, the constant "lording without understanding" exerted by governors and agents alike. Meanwhile, the unrest and sense of injustice in the hearts of the Indian people made trouble on all fronts.

Finally, after two hundred and fifty years of British occupancy, it was decided that the only safe way to put an end to company excesses was to put an end also to company rule, and the British Crown took over the government of India after the terrible Indian Mutiny of 1857. In the period just following that mutiny, treaties were made, the government was carefully reorganized, and today the King of England is also the Emperor of India.

England sent to India in every period of her control, before, during, and after company rule, some of her ablest sons. Among them are such names as those of Robert Clive, whose story has been so well told in the movies of our own day; Warren Hastings, the first governor general; Lord Minto, whose reforms went to the very root of the problem of giving India self-government; and, more recently, Lord Irwin, now Viscount Halifax. It is hard to give a fair picture of their contribution to India. It will no doubt be easier from the perspective of the year 2000, for by the time four full centuries have passed since Englishmen first landed on Indian soil, the problem of India's government may have been worked out to a more satisfactory conclusion. Who knows but by that time the Indian people may really have come into their own, and, after the thousands of years of rivalry between various powers, a truly united nation may have been developed, able to bring blessing to all the world by its great gifts? That will be a truly Golden Age for India!

Now let Dinabandhu take the pointer once more, and show us what the many migrations have wrought in India. Here are 352,000,000 people of many races and backgrounds—a "jigsaw of racial remnants," as one writer has called them. They speak

179 distinct languages and 544 dialects, grouped chiefly into three series: those derived from the Sanskrit of the Aryans, those descended from the language of the early primitive Dravidian peoples, and those dating back to the Asiatic influence and related to Chinese and Tibetan. Among the Moslems, and so increasingly among all the provinces of northern India, there has developed an intergroup language, Hindustani, which some are trying to nationalize for all India.

Can we summarize the religions in similar fashion? There are six major religious groups. The largest, of course, is that of Hinduism, with almost 240,000,000 people. The Moslems number today over 77,000,000, and of these more than half are to be found in the two provinces of Bengal and the Punjab. Nearly one-third of all the Moslems in the world are found in India. The total Christian movement numbers 6,296,763; of these 5,990,234 are Indian Christians, scattered all over India, speaking many languages and representing many varied backgrounds of race and caste. Fully one-half of the Christian population, however, is in South India.

Through the efforts of missionaries from many nations and of their Indian colleagues down through the centuries there has come into being, out of persecution and conflict often, the miracle of the Indian Christian church as it exists today. In a later chapter we shall see the warmth, the devotion, and the growing sense of self-sufficiency of that Indian church—Dinabandhu's people. It was begun in foreign conquest and too often associated with conquerors, as Islam is even now. But every day sends the Christian roots deeper into Indian soil, and the present-day history of India is intensely colored by the life of the Christian church.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *Dinabandhu Speaks Excellent English*

YOU DON'T TALK LIKE A FOREIGNER," SAYS ONE OF OUR group to Dinabandhu. "How can you speak English so well?"

"Why," says Dinabandhu promptly, "you see, I'm a British subject, so naturally I speak English."

"How long ago did you begin?" someone asks him.

"Well, in high school I took seriously to the business," he answers. "You see, it isn't like your learning French. All our science is taught in English and some of our mathematics, history, political science, civics, and government."

"Wow!" we say. "Don't you learn anything in your own language?"

"Yes; the grammar school, as you would call it, is a vernacular school. There we learn our own language, but we get on as quickly as possible to English."

"But why?"

"Because we couldn't participate in our government unless we did. The high officials are Englishmen. We want to be able to talk to them man to man, and to hold jobs."

"Bad business," says one of us disgustedly, "for a government man not to speak the language of the people."

"Which one?" says Dinabandhu. "There are many lan-

guages, and in a few years he may be transferred. And besides”—and here he laughs merrily—“you Anglo-Saxons are very poor linguists. We find it better to learn yours in most cases than to listen to the murdering of ours by stout English tongues. However, the officials are required to learn the language of their district, and they do the best they can.”

“But isn’t English frightfully boring to you?” asks one. “French is to me.”

“Not always. A good teacher makes it very lively business, and we enjoy dramatics. I’d have you know I’m a Shakespearean actor in a big way. The first play I was ever in, of any length, was ‘The Merchant of Venice.’ I was small enough and thin enough to take a girl’s part, so I was Portia. I’ll recite it for you any minute: ‘The quality of mercy is not strained. . . .’”

After the laugh that follows, we are thoughtful. “Abraham Lincoln said once,” speaks up one of our boys, “‘No man is great enough to rule another man. No nation is great enough to rule another nation.’ Do you believe that? How does a foreign power manage it in your country? Do they pull it off?”

“Well, now,” says Dinabandhu, “that depends. Some will tell you yes, and others emphatically no. We must be fair, though, so let’s look at this government business as justly as we can.”

#### *Benefits of the British Connection*

“It is our earnest desire,” said Queen Victoria, referring to India, in the early days of her reign, “to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein.” So firmly did English people get this idea that, stimulated by

such writers as Kipling, they felt keenly the responsibility of civilized white for Aryan brown. A great deal of nonsense, as well as much good literature, was written about the "white man's burden" and the inability of East and West to meet. All this must have been the source of much amusement to any prowling spirit of bygone days, who recalled the nomad ancestors of that white race as wild and primitive savages, while another branch of the same original race, which had moved down into India long before, was developing a highly complex civilization, building up a vast culture, and bringing into being at least two great religious faiths.

Certainly the English governors, in that day when responsible self-government was by no means general, met the most complex problems any rulers had to meet—and some, at least, of India's leaders would grant that Britain has brought gifts to India.

We must remind ourselves, first, of the railroads—42,000 miles of which have been constructed in India at a cost of some \$2,500,000,000, now under general control of the government. Indians are increasingly employed and trained for the jobs in a railroad staff college. Railways were built for the benefit of English trade and English government, but India has profited, and Indian travel increased.

A second benefit has been the relief of India's frequent famines. The British government has met them by famine insurance grants, by reforestation and flood control, and other scientific checking of the causes.

A third benefit has come from the raising of the economic standard. India everywhere still seems so pathetically poor that it is hard to see improvement. "The most optimistic esti-

mate is that of the Simon Commission, which put the average income per head at \$40 per year, whereas the corresponding figure for Great Britain was \$475 per head; and a sadly large proportion of the population live on the brink of starvation, and never have a really sufficient meal."<sup>1</sup> Today's average is estimated by some authorities as somewhat of an improvement over that of thirty years ago, and the government has tried to lift it by encouraging rural credit banks, by making laws against the money-lenders, by the inspection of accounts, and by education on cooperative banks and savings.

### *States and Provinces*

Politically, the various sections of India are grouped into two large divisions, British India and the native states.

British India consists of those sections which are directly under British rule, and constitutes nearly three-fifths of the whole. In it there are eleven "governor's provinces" and six minor provinces under commissioners.

Then there are nearly six hundred so-called native states, each ruled by its own reigning prince. They range in size from tiny municipalities, little more than large estates, to great territories, the largest being Kashmir and Hyderabad, each with an area greater than New England. Through agreements made in the early days with the East India Company, the states remain entirely self-governing, but under the suzerainty, or protection, of England.

It would be hopeless to try to describe the government of

<sup>1</sup> From *Dawn in India*, by Sir Francis Younghusband, from which source also the subsequent estimates were taken. Used by permission of the publishers, Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York.

the native states. Some are very advanced, some very backward. A few have attained an even higher standard than is enjoyed by British India. In one thing, however, the native states are alike: their subjects are not British subjects but their governments acknowledge England's influence. Each one manages its own affairs, but no one state can deal with foreign governments. The Chamber of Princes meets in a magnificent Hall of Debate in New Delhi, and there the rulers exchange ideas and work out joint policies with the British government.

### *Government in British India*

The development of constitutional government has been a recent matter in the history of the world. Our own constitution was long in the making, and amended from time to time. So in India, by one act after another, charters and constitutions were adopted and changed, but one thing stood out: up to 1937 the real control and authority was in England, in the English parliament in which were no Indian representatives.

The year 1917 opened a new phase of constitutional change. For it was in that year that Edward Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, made official pronouncement of the central idea on which government for India is being remade today. "The policy of His Majesty's government, with which the government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the *progressive realization of responsible government* in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

That expression, "progressive realization of responsible gov-

ernment," marked a decided change from the earlier days. The first step in carrying it out was accomplished with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. One result for India was a legislature and a real constitution. The Indian legislature consisted of the Council of State, with sixty members, thirty-three of whom were elected; and a new body called the Legislative Assembly, with one hundred and forty-five members, of whom one hundred and four were elected and forty-one nominated by the Crown.

Now from this it might be imagined that the plan gave India a real parliament, but that was not the case. The Indian legislature had, to be sure, little more than the power of speech, and the governor's veto could nullify almost any action it might take. However, in spite of that fact, its power of speech has exercised a tremendous influence on government policy, and has to a very large extent determined legislation.

The men who drafted the Montagu-Chelmsford Report wrote: "The process will begin in local affairs which we have long since intended and promised to make over to them." So in the provinces responsibility was divided between the British governor, with his ministers or council, and Indian ministers chosen from the elected assembly. This system was called diarchy. Police, courts, irrigation, revenues, prisons, were "reserved" for British authority; while local government, public works, health, education, and agriculture were "transferred" to Indian ministers.

Democratic government depends on an intelligent voting body of common people. For that India was little prepared. The common man seldom looked beyond his village. Nevertheless, though the first elections took place only in 1920, the

percentage of eligible voters actually using their privilege doubled in the following three years, and in some places today as many as eighty per cent of them vote. The ballots prepared for illiterate men and women have pictures and symbols to guide them in their choice of candidates.

An intelligent citizenship requires a real educational system and common schools, and in this India has long been defective. The British government has been frequently criticized because of the fact that after all these years it is still true, according to most estimates, that only eight per cent of the people can read and write in any language. The chief government faults have been an over-emphasis on the use of English and on higher education, and a too limited proportion of the budget designated for education.

I met in an Indian village a young man who had just been appointed school teacher, because he "had a degree" and degrees were important. He had a calling card with his name all carefully printed, and after it the letters "F.B.A." I questioned him about this. Ah, yes, "F.B.A.!" That meant "Failed B.A.!" He had failed to get a B.A.—pathetic evidence that the foreign system of degrees has left the wrong kind of mark on village India.

But we must not confuse literacy with intelligence or illiteracy with ignorance. The classical lore of Hinduism, its hero tales, dramas, poems, religious teachings, and even its laws, coming down by word of mouth, have been India's educational system and have developed a people by no means ignorant even when they cannot read or write.

To the average Indian villager the word for government is *raj*, the ruler, the rajah; but in British India the ruler is a

far-away person, and the viceroy or governor general takes his place. No pageant in the world is more fascinating in its pomp and circumstance than the great *durbar*, or state ceremony, when the viceroy takes office. The present viceroy is John Hope, the Marquis of Linlithgow.

At two important points the British government has held tight control. One is the army, where a small handful of British troops and officers has held India subject by directing a vast body of men recruited from her own people; even today only ten Indian men are admitted to Sandhurst, England's West Point, at any one time. The other place is the high court, where at the top of the elaborate structure of the Indian judicial system stands the chartered court whose judges are appointed by His Majesty from among the lawyers of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

### *Government and Religion*

When the Portuguese conquerors took possession of a new land, they planted the cross firmly and drove it with a spear into the soil and into the lives of the people. This has never been the policy of the British government, which has maintained rigid neutrality between religious sects. Indeed, the first British missionaries had to sail in foreign ships, so anxious were the English rulers not to offend their Indian trade. Religious instruction has never been permitted in state schools, nor has Christianity had any preference in filling government positions. Nevertheless, when Britain assumed control of India, the subject peoples considered her to be a Christian nation. Moreover, the new conquerors understood India's own religious customs so little, and rode over them with such ap-

parent ease, that there grew up a feeling that the superiority complex of the Britisher extended also to his religion.

In vain with lavish kindness the gifts of God are strewn,  
The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone. . . .  
Shall we whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high,  
Shall we to men benighted the lamp of life deny?

These words and others like them, sung in the hymns and spoken in the prayers and sermons in the churches of England, told the story to the Indian listener.

But there was always at the heart of real Christianity a swift and responsive sympathy to need and suffering wherever seen. From the time of the pioneer German and British missionaries—Ziegenbalg, Schwartz, Carey, and their companions—the church has poured out most generously its service for the unselfish care of India, in hospitals, schools, social service centers, rural reconstruction.

The most influential college in India today is Madras Christian College, originally a Scottish missionary institution, where today a group of British and American missionary societies unite in giving the finest type of university education to Indian youth. Madras is proud of this institution, host to the 1938 meeting of the International Missionary Council. It is typical of the splendid missionary colleges throughout the land, where young India has met more than one type of Westerner, and had contact with selfless, radiant, warm personalities, whose whole purpose was neither commercial nor legislative, but only a sincere and loving concern for every Indian man, woman, and child whatever his caste or creed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### *But He Is a Young Patriot*

ON THE WHOLE, THEN," ONE OF US MAY SAY TO DINABANDHU, "it looks as if the British had given you pretty good government. But what's all the fuss about, then? Why do we hear about boycotts and riots and cries for home rule?"

"In answer to your questions," says Dinabandhu, "I'll ask you some: Why the Stamp Act and the Boston Tea Party? What was the meaning of 'Taxation without representation is tyranny'? Account for the Minute Men and Paul Revere. For their day, your forefathers were ruled by the most efficient government in the world. Then why was that little helpless-looking army, with no uniforms and inadequate ammunition, given spirit enough to stand up to the Red Coats, and why are you so proud of it?

"Looking back now with something of a smile, perhaps you realize that there were honest Tories who were convinced that the colonies were jumping to sure destruction and death. There were those among them, as I understand it, who believed that some other nation would rush in to grab the country and that there were not enough experienced leaders in those colonies to conduct a government. Yet in spite of all that you have built a nation.

"So exactly it is with my country and even more, you see," says Dinabandhu as he looks about at our astonished faces. "For you were throwing off the yoke of the motherland, while we would be throwing off the yoke of a foreign government put upon us for the benefit of the conqueror, and really carried on for commercial advantage."

Some skeptical soul in our midst is sure to say, "But look back to the time when England first took over the government. Surely there was chaos then."

"True enough," says Dinabandhu, "but that same kind of chaos has existed in most countries. Who knows what might have developed in India also as mankind gradually gained a new sense of government and substituted law for military control?"

"So you would just connect the history of India's struggle for home rule with similar movements in the rest of the world?" we say hesitantly.

"Yes," answers our Indian brother. "And the Russo-Japanese War, which showed the world that a hitherto despised and patronized Oriental people could conquer a big Western nation like Russia, had almost as much to do with our new independence movement as with Japan's present imperial desires."

In bewilderment one of our number asks, "But do you think that race prejudice enters into the story?"

"Indeed, yes," our friend makes emphatic response. "Our English rulers, however fair-minded and honest as governors, feel our inferiority as people and consider our customs wrong because they are different. It galls us that in our own land some Englishmen still think they ought to be allowed to ride

alone in railway compartments in which their very presence makes Indians feel unwanted; that the finest clubs in our cities are for the Englishmen whose salaries our taxes support, but that no Indian of however high class may set foot within the premises. It infuriates us to realize that our taxes and revenues so often work to the advantage of Britain though we are absolutely necessary to her economic future; and that the highest posts in our government go to Englishmen whose salaries are spent in England, not in India, and whose pensions for retirement make a heavy claim on our poverty-stricken people.

"Yet every Englishman will say that India is the keystone of the British Empire, that three of every four subjects of the king are here. So we resent the fact that our citizens find color discrimination against them in every part of the British Empire, and in some parts are forbidden to buy land or to vote, and are even pushed into segregated areas to live. That's what it is to be a subject people."

"So that's the why of nationalism!" we say, somewhat embarrassed.

"Brother," says Dinabandhu, "that's the why of *swaraj*—which really means 'self-government.' India wants to govern herself, as you should well understand."

### *The Roots of Nationalism*

Some writers see the first root of India's rebellion as lying in the very nature of Great Britain's rule; some in India's own past. In *India, Peace or War?* C. S. Ranga Iyer, a member of the Indian Legislative Assembly, says: "With Western education came Western ideas of liberty and a desire for parliamen-

tary institutions. India's contact with the main stream of the world's thought and learning was bound to change her face and outlook." Indians taught to read John Stuart Mill, Wordsworth, Milton, to study Garibaldi and the Magna Charta, could not help having dreams of a new independence.

But almost equally they remembered the past glories of their own country, and spiritually they looked upon themselves as superior to their conquerors. "In Europe and America they found much to cause repulsion—the haste and rush of life, the materialism and foolery; but much also to stir them. They came back to India with a distaste of what they had seen, but with fresh air in their lungs and their backbones stiffened. . . . The idea of nationhood was forming in their plans."<sup>1</sup>

There were also, as causal factors, the faults in India's too Westernized government; its costliness; the lack of progress in literacy; the destruction of India's finest native art and industries in favor of foreign, cheap, machine-made goods.

A close student of the Indian home rule movement would point to the World War, which we are accustomed to blame for so many things, as another cause. The idealism expressed at that time—"making the world safe for democracy," the "self-determination of minorities"—and even more, perhaps, the dependence of the British government upon Indian resources in the winning of that war—these India can never forget. She poured out money and men far beyond even the dream of English leadership, and she expected that that loyalty would win for her at least a voice in the great English

<sup>1</sup> *Dawn in India*, by Sir Francis Younghusband, p. 23. New York, Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1931.

commonwealth that needed her so much. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms seemed slow and cautious; and the sending of the Simon Commission in 1928 to see whether India had made enough progress to be granted some additional measure of self-government seemed but an insult in the face of her big hopes and England's promises. Worst of all was the fact that no Indians were appointed on that commission for the first period of its study.

### *The First Step Towards Independence*

We are inclined to regard India's struggle for nationalism as beginning with Gandhi and in the twentieth century. But the first restless movement of Indian men and women, in combination with Englishmen who longed to give India a better government, brought into being in 1885 the Indian National Congress—the organization which, more than any other, has influenced India's present political life and promoted her movement for independence. The Congress met in Bombay in that year, and since then has met every year in December, each time in a different city.

It has never had legislative power, and is just what its name implies—a congress, organized chiefly to provide a voice to convey to England the best of Indian public opinion.

One of the steps by which it attempted to register that opinion was the sending of delegations regularly to England. Two brilliant Indian names will go down in history for efforts through that Congress: K. C. Banerjee and Dadabhai Naoroji, the latter sometimes called “the grand old man of India,” who practically made England his second home. The reforms which have gradually brought Indians into govern-

ment have resulted in large measure from the activities of the Congress.

In the early days of 1900 the Congress was split, and its influence since then has been largely that of a political party. It has been sometimes the party of moderates; sometimes taken over by the extremists; and consequently has alternated between periods of strength and periods of weakness. Today it is relatively strong, as we shall see.

Throughout all its history the longing for independence in India has grown by leaps and bounds. The moderates, whether in or out of Congress, have tried to hold it back, to work more slowly and in loyalty to the British *raj*. The extremists have used every opportunity for boycotting English goods and English government. But both factions have worked steadily toward that dim goal of Indian freedom.

### *Gandhi, the Flame of Independence*

In the present day two significant personalities, one old and one young, embody India's struggle. More than anyone, Mahatma Gandhi—Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi—has dramatized for India and the world her desire to govern herself. All the nationalism, patriotism, and sense of outrage that we have described have gathered around the personality of this saint, philosopher, and friend of the Indian people. Everyone who tries to know present-day India should read the life of Gandhi written by his friend, C. F. Andrews. Many word portraits have been painted of him and there is great diversity of opinion about him; but whether they agree or disagree with his views, support or oppose him, the Indian people unanimously regard him with reverence and affection. No Westerner can

adequately understand him, but all desire to argue dies in one's throat as one sits a few moments in the presence of his greatness.

I once stood almost frightened in an Indian village hundreds of miles away from Gandhi's home, among illiterate peasant people in a crowded market place, and saw them go wild with joy at the mention of his name as they shouted: "*Jai! Jai! Mahatma Gandhiji ki jai, jai, jai!*" I said to a friend: "They love him, but why?" "Because," said he seriously, "they know that he has made their misery his. He is the dramatization of their only hope, the personification of their need. They almost identify him with God."

Who is this little man who can so catch the imagination of a great people? He belongs to a well known family of the Vaisya caste, out of which many politicians have come. His father was prime minister in a small native state, and throughout his boyhood Gandhi lived in the atmosphere of public affairs. His father planned for him to enter political life and had him taught English by an Irish tutor. Gandhi's English to this day has a slight Irish accent, and perhaps his soul a bit of Irish rebellion! He studied law in London, passed the English bar examinations with honors, established a prosperous practice in Africa and India, and took up the triple causes of widow remarriage, removal of untouchability, and Indian home rule. Upon these he has poured out his life, his money, and his heart.

In order to understand Gandhi's program for India, we need to learn the meaning of three Indian words: *swaraj*, *swadeshi*, and *satyagraha*, each of which is connected with one of his three major ideas.

*Swaraj* means literally "self-rule." To him India's freedom means not only cutting off the British connection but developing within India the real ability to govern and control herself, to merge her many factions in one people, each sacrificing for the sake of a greater whole.

But to Gandhi, India's home rule means also developing her own products. Poverty was to him India's most insuperable obstacle, and the use of English cotton goods, which had so largely supplanted village fabrics, seemed to him an important factor; so "Buy Indian" is one of his slogans. Since agriculture cannot supply enough income for India's millions unless supplemented by cottage industries, and since hand spinning is the oldest and simplest cottage industry, he introduced the spinning wheel, or *charka*, as a symbol of home industry and so even of home rule. *Swadeshi*, literally "own country," is the word most often used to express the idea of "Buy Indian." *Khaddar*, or homespun cloth, became another magic word, and homespun garments have been adopted by most of young India as a national dress. Patriotic shops display Indian-made goods, and at the time the Congress meets one cannot buy in Congress shops so much as a button of British manufacture.

Gandhi believed, moreover, with all his heart that India could achieve home rule without bloodshed if her people made use, as a veritable force for freedom, of the laws of love and truth. *Satyagraha* is impossible to translate exactly into English. Most nearly we can call it "love-truth-force." Love and truth combined can remake civilization. It must be a love that can discriminate honestly between evil and good, and select the good. It must be truth that will be in keeping with love,

will reject selfish motives, and will never accept violence as a method. The soul, by these two forces, can conquer even a military power. Man, Gandhi believes, has never really tried it, though Jesus taught it in the Sermon on the Mount.

For Gandhi the practical outcome of *satyagraha* is really civil disobedience. Nothing is more difficult for a Westerner to understand. In effect what Gandhi said to his people was this: "The success of the British government depends upon you. If you are unwilling for it to succeed, you can simply cease to cooperate, and government will be impossible. This I beg you to do. This means, do not buy British, do not vote, do not attend meetings; do not accept police protection or courts; do not ride on railroads government-owned." At the same time he held before his followers the fact that this meant complete self-sacrifice, even to death; for they must be willing to face a government which would still be using force, and yet they themselves must refuse to oppose violence with violence.

Now the program of that saint and hero, adopted by many of his followers through confidence in him, was yet seldom understood by them. How could they restrain themselves from violence? How could they refuse to pay their taxes? Again and again the process broke down in riot and violence. Strikes begun in non-violence ended in bloodshed. Moreover, many of the leaders of the Nationalist party found that the method accomplished little in comparison with their hopes. In the end the party broke away from Gandhi's method and control.

Gandhi himself has proved to his people many times over his own complete acceptance of his non-violence theory. His two long fasts, entered into from absolutely selfless motives when violence threatened to break out among his followers,

or when division seemed about to break the unity of the Indian people, have made all parties and all ages love him almost to the point of worship. When the government at one time felt that only the arrest of Gandhi could solve the problem, and he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment without labor, his jail became a place of pilgrimage, and Gandhi the martyr of Indian home rule. His spiritual and mental power are to this day unbroken.

### *Nehru, the Hero of Young India*

Just as Gandhi dramatized and brought into being in its modern form the Indian home rule movement, so Jawaharlal Nehru, to whom the title of Pundit is usually given, is likely to be the leading figure of tomorrow's India. He is forty-seven years old, and has suffered imprisonment seven times, spending a total of six years in the jails of British India and of the native states. He has been beaten by the mounted police, lived in starvation and poverty, yet risen steadily, by his dynamic personality, to influence and power.

He was born "with a silver spoon in his mouth," the son of the outstanding lawyer of his day who lived in wealth and luxury till Gandhi laid so great a hold on his heart that he gave nearly all his fortune and even his palatial home to the Congress and the home rule movement. Jawaharlal is today an enthusiastic apostle of the simple life and loves Gandhi with a son's devotion.

At sixteen he went to England with his parents and got his education after the pattern of the average English boy, at Harrow, at Trinity College, Cambridge, and at the Inner Temple. He was called to the Bar in 1912, and soon returned

to India. He was drawn into political affairs and twenty years later he became the youngest president of the Indian Congress. The youth of India took him as their ideal. His high moral character commanded the respect of all, peasant and city youngster alike.

What new ideal does Nehru stand for? He is interested in India's connection with the wide world. Gandhi would have India look in upon herself and find her own foundations alone. Nehru believes that India will be great and free, not by stepping back into the past and away from the rest of the world, but by qualifying herself as a unit in that world and directing her steps out into the future.

The method for which Nehru stands is that of socialism. In his presidential address before the Congress in 1936 he said:

I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems lies in socialism, and when I use this word I do so not in a vague, humanitarian way but in an economic sense. I see no way of ending the poverty, the degradation, and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. I have no desire to force the issue in the Congress in our struggle for independence, and I shall cooperate gladly with all who work for independence even though they do not agree with me on the solution.

While Gandhi placed religion as fundamental and paramount in every phase of life, Nehru frankly stands for the position that all religion is unnecessary:

Our religion is one of the kitchen—of what to touch and what not to touch—of marks and fasts and ceremonies. Our very gods are manufactured in the factories of England or Japan. . . .

Hinduism provides no solution for the modern problems of our country. Its social ethics can speak no word concerning the new conditions created by the factory system.<sup>1</sup>

He is bewildered at Gandhi's intense "religiosity," which he has no basis of experience to help him understand. Yet his quick sensitiveness to the sufferings of others, his contempt for dishonesty in word and thought, his loyalty and devotion to the cause and his willingness to suffer for it, seem to many of his friends fine Christian qualities learned in a Christian school; and he himself has said more than once, "The personality of Christ has greatly attracted me."

### *What Happens Next?*

India's struggle is, of course, unfinished. On the first of April, 1937, the new constitution, the result of ten years of study and effort beginning with the report of the Simon Commission and continued in the Round Table Conferences in London, went into effect in about one-half of its provisions. The United States constitution can be reproduced in twenty printed pages. India's has over two hundred pages, with a hundred pages of appendix and an even larger volume of subsidiary acts.

The part that has been put into effect involves two major steps. First, the possible voting body of Indians has been increased from six million to about thirty million, the franchise being based not on property, but on education and intelligent interest and experience in the community. Five million of the new voters are women. Second, the provincial legislatures

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Contemporary Thought of India*, by Alfred C. Underwood, p. 66. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1931.

have been given practically full control over the government of their own provinces, authority to be carried by a group of Indian ministers holding office only so long as they are supported and approved by the legislature elected by the people. This is, of course, the English parliamentary system.

The second part of the new constitution will, according to plan, be put into effect when it has been demonstrated that this first step has been successfully taken. Till then the British officials can intervene only if breakdown threatens, in "civil order and financial credit."

The complete constitutional scheme will create a federal government out of all these provinces and the native states, similar to our government, in which the states have their own authority but are bound into a nation. This Federation of India, with the native states participating, is the most startling feature of the plan. For the present, defense and the conduct of foreign affairs are still under British control, but this is supposed to be temporary also.

Writes the Marquis of Zetland, the Secretary of State for India:

In constructing this new constitution we have been under fire from both flanks. A large body of British opinion thought we were going too far and too fast. Indian opinion held that too little was being conceded. We are, in fact, following a middle course. Even so it is a big step forward that we are taking. . . . Those who are concerned with human progress will join us in the hope that India, while retaining all that is of value of her ancient and distinctive culture, will be able to take up her due position among the great nations of the world.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "India's New Constitution," by the Marquis of Zetland, in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Weekly Magazine Section, March 17, 1937.

Is India satisfied? Oh, no, not yet of course. The Indian National Congress at first opposed both the provincial plan and also the proffered plan for federation. To them the constitution seemed still to place too much power in the hands of the Viceroy and the British government, and so they determined to recommend non-cooperation. The first elections, however, were enthusiastically patronized by the voters, and to the amazement of nearly everyone the members of the Congress Party were elected to office in great numbers in all provinces, and in sufficient strength to control absolutely seven of the eleven legislatures. Congress therefore determined upon partial cooperation, and a watchful, waiting attitude as far as the provinces were concerned; but they continued to be actively opposed to the federal portion of the government plan.

The first years of the new provincial governments proved amazingly successful. Things went smoothly in general, with the exception of one dangerous period in February, 1938. Two of the provincial governments decided to release from jail all political prisoners being held at that time. The Viceroy then for the first time exercised his veto power. The governments of the two provinces, Bihar and the United Provinces, promptly walked out, and only the intervention of Mr. Gandhi—"still the most influential person in the Congress"<sup>1</sup>—and the tactful attitude of the Viceroy saved the situation. A compromise was effected by which the provincial governments and the British officials agreed to consider each case as a separate case, rather than to deal with all political prisoners in wholesale fashion. The outcome was called by one of the leading Nationalist papers "a landmark in the history

<sup>1</sup> Indian correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*.

of British administration in India," and by an English correspondent, "a triumph for the new spirit of reformed India."

Having weathered this first crisis, India's leaders became more optimistic as to the future possibilities in this new government, even though the Congress of 1938 was unable to reach very definite conclusions as to its attitude toward the federal plan, when it comes. Certainly the country is passing through stirring times, which must thrill her young people to new enthusiasm for their part in a reconstructed India.

As we meet and talk with Dinabandhu we feel increasingly the fire created by Gandhi and Nehru in his soul, and we thrill with him in his response to the leadership of these two fine, sincere prophets. Indeed, he is very likely to see in them an illustration of what Jesus meant when he said to his followers: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it."

Dinabandhu one day sat spellbound in an audience, waiting for Gandhi to speak. The frail figure bore upon his body the marks of much suffering. When he rose, he took out a New Testament, and read from it these words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and so on to the end of the Beatitudes. Then he said, simply: "That is my address to you. Act upon that."

## CHAPTER SIX

### *Dinabandhu Is a Country Boy*

THE BIGGEST EVENT OF DINABANDHU'S BOYHOOD WAS THE country fair to which he went with his father every year after he was nine years old. It was held by the Christians in the Village of the Light, as they called it. Other Indian fairs were held in connection with Hindu and Moslem religious festivals or at centers of pilgrimage, with all kinds of wares and entertainment to lure pennies from the pilgrims.

But the purpose of the Village of the Light Agricultural Fair was to "demonstrate, illustrate, and educate." Agricultural experts came from all over that part of India, and gave lectures in great open tents, showing slides of the best methods of selecting grain and of raising better cattle. All around the big central tent were exhibition booths: grains, flower and vegetable seeds, fruit, cattle, poultry, handicrafts, and even products made in the various schools, with one special booth arranged like a village home and displaying twenty-five different varieties of articles for the family.

The table where the prizes were exhibited was looked at with envy and delight by Dinabandhu and his friends. In addition to larger prizes there were many given to stimulate interest—improved seeds, with directions for planting; and small dishes for household use.

They liked to stand at the gate to watch the tremendous crowd which poured in. Many of the men carried baskets of grain on their heads. Women bore trays of flowers or seeds. In and out among the crowd one could see an occasional late arrival for the cattle or poultry show. Every village in the countryside had a part in the exhibit.

The season before Dinabandhu went away to school, the fair was bigger than ever before, and the government sent twenty-five head of their finest cattle to show the results of scientific production of milk cows and draft oxen.

Dinabandhu wandered around listening to the exhibitors. "Look at our roses! Could there be finer anywhere in the world? These wonderful and beautiful roses were produced right here in Pendra Road." "Just handle these grapefruit!" "Look at this *pomelo* and these oranges!" "Nowhere will you find better pumpkins than these!" In the vegetable booths Canada's prize sweet potato, a foot long, had been imported as a standard; and, lo and behold! a near-by villager had beaten the record!

Dinabandhu's mother always liked to take one or two of her friends with her to the fair, for in the housewives' exhibit were splendid demonstrations of jams and jellies, fruit juices, bottled vegetables and canned fruits; and every year added to the variety. This would be her starting point for a lecture on vitamins to some mother of little undernourished children. She also liked to encourage the mother of the finest, plumpest baby in their own village to enter her offspring in the baby show, where usually anywhere up to two hundred babies were weighed and judged.

The afternoon program for the young people included a

series of sports events in which two or three hundred participated. When the audience dispersed, after shouting themselves hoarse to encourage the runners and pole vaulters, all were invited to the church building, where the men's Bible class put on a program of music, and a fine series of addresses, to share with the crowd the message of their own faith.<sup>1</sup>

It was only when he was older, and thinking in terms of India's poverty and all that she needed to have done for her, that Dinabandhu realized how much was accomplished by the fair toward lifting India out of that very poverty; how many farmers were encouraged to do new things they had never tried before; and how many village people were helped to see what could be done and to catch the inspiration for doing it.

### *The Village Scene*

The villages of which Dinabandhu's is a sample are much more representative of India's life than any urban community. There are seven hundred thousand villages, varying from little hamlets of a few score people to scattered communities of a few thousand; and laid so thick upon the landscape that often there is not even a mile's distance between them. The Indian farmer does not live upon the land he cultivates. He lives in the village and goes out each morning to his fields, remaining for the entire day. Moreover, a farmer's fields may not be adjacent to one another, but widely scattered because of the age-long inheritance system by which every field passed on by a father to his sons must be divided evenly among them.

But because of their poverty and the necessity of obtaining

<sup>1</sup> Taken from an account of an actual village agricultural fair, described in a letter written by a missionary to his board.

money for seed, the farmers have far too often been obliged to sell their holdings. So every village includes fields belonging to wealthy absentee owners and rented back to the farmers. The *zamindar*, or landlord, gains by this vicious evil a strangle hold on the life of a village for generations.

The fields worked by a farmer like Dinabandhu's grandfather must be irrigated, usually from a well fitted with a large wooden wheel turned by a patient bullock, blindfolded so that he will not become dizzy as he is driven round and round all day.

A small farm owner usually belongs to one of the great middle castes of India, though he may be of any other caste, from the Brahman landlord down. The workers on the farms, however, are from different castes according to the type of their occupation. All the repairs on the plows, water-wheels, and instruments, for example, are done by the carpenter. And everyone may be pressed into planting and harvesting.

It would be difficult to give a description of a village that would fit all parts of India, for villages differ as climate and religion differ; but some things they have in common. Each village consists of a huddle of houses, arranged in little streets or lanes, or in clusters, each group representing a caste.

Just inside the bounds of the village is the potter's hut. Here he molds roof tiles, and on his wheel swiftly turns a lump of clay into vessels of all shapes and sizes for household use, and containers for oil and grease. On the edge of the village is the shepherds' quarter, with numerous little folds, where the shepherds' wives and children spend their leisure time spinning and weaving coarse blankets and selling milk and wool. There is the oil presser's house—shop, factory, and home in one, from

whose presses comes all the oil for the lighting and cooking in the village. There are the carpenter's shop and the barber's shop; and, far on the outskirts, the huts of the tanners and lowly sweepers. Every village has these, grouped in separate "quarters" if the village is large enough.

In addition there are many other workers: the tobacco merchant, the parcher of grain, the goldsmith, the bangle seller. Down in the center of the larger villages is the bazaar, with little open-front shops before which the wares are set out in baskets, earthen vessels, or even in old kerosene oil tins. In the midst of the merchandise sits the shopkeeper, and inside, at the back, is his home.

The center of social life in every Indian village is the well, or the tank, or both. The tank is the reservoir necessary in most parts of India, where the rains all come in one season. A noisy crowd at almost any hour of the day surrounds the tank: the village housewife who cannot hire a washerman, little girls scouring the brass and copper bowls with sand and water; people bathing. Some corner of the tank will be reserved for the *dhabi*, or washerman. Day after day, all the year long, he washes clothes upon the stones, "as a man might thresh grain with a flail." At sunset hour the men and boys gather about the tank with the bullocks and cattle.

Small wonder that by the end of the dry season—long, long before the monsoon brings the rains—the tank has become a menace to public health and the water jars filled by the women each morning carry disease and death in every pot.

In each village there are a few substantial houses, belonging to people who own their own land. Some of these are built of brick with tile roofs, or in some parts of India of stone.

Most, however, are constructed of hand-made mud brick covered with plaster. The farther you go from these better homes to the edge of the village, the smaller become the huts, until you reach the scattered cluster of one-room dilapidated out-caste huts, made by building up layer after layer of mud.

The few animals owned by the farmer, except the sheep, live right in the same house with him. He does not have what we call a stable. A great landed estate, attempting modern agriculture, may have one, but the average owner would not dare risk his animals at any distance from his own roof. They are fastened up in the courtyard; and in a smaller home they occupy the front room.

No village, of course, is complete without its place of worship. In some cases this is a fair-sized temple with a full-time Brahman priest in attendance; but in small villages there may be nothing more than a little shrine with a few sacred stones and roughly carved images. Here there is no special ritual such as would require a priest. And in villages in which Christians live there is a church, or at least a worship platform where the congregation gathers in the open.

#### *The Village Is a Busy Place*

From the earliest dawn till long beyond the setting of the sun the village toils in a great variety of tasks, except for the one hot period in the middle of the day, when every person, yes, even every beast, finds a shady spot in which to doze.

Until very recently each village was entirely self-contained: no necessities of life came in from outside; nothing went out, except to the landlord. Today, however, that situation is

changed, and in most parts of India there is at least a limited amount of going and coming to and from the outside world. In *Moving Millions*, Alice B. Van Doren pictures the new scene thus:

A motor bus carrying twice the legitimate number of passengers, and with its top loaded with vast accretions of tin trunks, bundles, cooking pots, and household goods of infinite variety, whirls precariously around a corner and by some miracle of Providence arrives in the midst of babies, buffaloes, and hens without destroying a single life. In the wheezing, overcrowded bus we see the climax of rural change in India. . . . The bus is the villager's own possession. In it he travels—at twenty miles an hour instead of two. In it the peasant goes to the town and the town, with its new ways and alluring products, comes to the countryside.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to being largely self-supporting and self-containing, the village is also self-governing to a far greater extent than one would believe from seeing the national political scene. The village knows little of national movements.

The chief leader of the Indian village is the landlord, but his representative agent or collector is equally important. Many a perfectly well-meaning landlord is misunderstood by his tenants and knows little of their plight, because of the personality—overbearing and egotistical and power-loving—of his agent, who may even be sorely tempted by his own small salary to collect a bit for himself, though it push the poverty-stricken tenant to the wall.

Since time immemorial village disputes have been settled

<sup>1</sup> "India's Rural Millions," by Alice B. Van Doren, in *Moving Millions*, pp. 76-77. Boston, Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions and Missionary Education Movement, 1938.

by what is known as the *panchayat*, a committee of five, selected for each case from recognized leaders.

Along with the *panchayat*, official responsibility rests in the village head man. In his own way he is a magistrate, purely honorary, receiving no pay, but appointed by the government to represent the village in all outside relationships. He is usually picked because he is known to be popular, but even more because he knows everything that has happened in the village. The porch of his house, or the veranda before his store, becomes a kind of official lounging place, where men gather to talk over affairs. The village watchman reports there, and the police constable; and people sit for long hours repeatedly asking favors, hoping in the long run His Honor will have time to grant them. There are also some officers who are hired for the village service: the two watchmen, who act as police while carrying on their own caste occupations as well; and the accountant with his assistant, on full time and subject to many temptations, since his village constituency can neither read nor write.

The religious leaders are of several types. Every Brahman is automatically in a position of leadership, but not necessarily so recognized by his village, especially if he is particularly disliked. At least one Brahman in a village (if any Brahmans live there) is designated as the priest. He must interrupt his duties as a farmer to perform his religious services whenever called for in temple worship, funeral, wedding, or family ceremony. Sometimes, too, he must be the village school teacher.

Yet he is not by any means the only religious leader. There are holy men supposed to be capable of healing afflictions or performing spells or casting out demons. Such men may give

charms which are said to enable a woman to have children; and if a buffalo fails to give milk, the holy man may be counted on to tell the cause of the difficulty. Then there is the man recognized as having skill in treating disease and in massage who, though of low caste or only an outcaste, may be called in to care for high-caste villagers.

From all this activity one might imagine a fairly prosperous farm life. Not so. The income of the average farmer in India is thirty-five dollars a year, apart of course from the food necessary to his own family. An income of seventy dollars is really substantial, but it allows small margin. The farmer is never free from worry, is always in debt, and, though he represents nine-tenths of the population, his day is just dawning.

#### *But Jack Is Not a Dull Boy*

The village does play, and with a gaiety and enthusiasm that is often the envy of the colder West. Much of the recreational life takes place at night, especially at full moon, when it seems to the visitor that the village never sleeps. There are holiday seasons, too, and of course the slack times between crops.

Village India is fond of music and singing. Throngs of villagers sit for hours listening to a musician who composes and accompanies himself on a simple stringed instrument. They gather about a traveling orchestra with home-made instruments, a whole show in itself, with a variety of sound, rhythm, and even action. Traveling entertainers are always received with joy. Magicians, acrobats, snake charmers, and especially the traveling theatre, all have their welcome in the village, which sometimes puts on its own show, too.

The sports of the village are worthy of mention, though

they are never commercialized. Games, races, and most common of all, tugs-of-war, bring near-by villages together with wild enthusiasm and competition, especially at the time of the festivals and at the fairs.

Today the bus brings the movies within reach, when even a few cents extra are available; and the conversation in many a village in India deals with the latest in movie stars, just as in the United States.

The Christian community has, of course, recreations of its own, as we shall see in a later chapter.

### *Christ Comes to the Village*

The missionary has done much to improve the condition of the villager, though of course when it has all been recounted it is but a drop in the bucket. He has here and there blazed trails in actual agricultural experiment and training.

The most famous missionary exponent of improved agriculture is Dr. Sam Higginbottom, who has made the combination of the gospel and the plow famous, and whose Allahabad Agricultural Institute has demonstrated on a large scale what smaller Christian centers have made even more practical through industrial training schools and experiments in grain selection and poultry raising. He is recognized by the government as a leader in all agricultural matters, and today the Institute has a broadcasting station through which it reaches many a village inaccessible before.

If there were time, it would be fascinating to recount the experience at Martandam, far south in Travancore. This is a combination of experiment station and training school organized by the Young Men's Christian Association, not for the

training of experts, but to help a community improve the quality of its crops, market its produce, and lift its general everyday life by short-term education of experienced young farmers. The entire program is planned on a five-fold emphasis—economic, mental, physical, social, and spiritual; for Christianity is the gospel of an abundant life and for the whole of life. Already Martandam has turned out nine hundred graduates, who are spreading in their district what they have learned, and establishing centers in other areas.

Christians have also blazed trails in cooperative credit societies, in medical experiments, and now at last in health extension work. But only recently has the Christian group, as well as the government, really become rural-minded. Today the gospel has literally moved out into the country village.

One of the most fascinating stories of village reconstruction is that of the Sangli Movable School, which has its base at the mission station of Sangli, in western India:

This has been developed in the last five or six years to reach totally illiterate villages with all types of improvement at the same time. A truck is provided with a body equipped to carry educational and other advantages to old and young, even at a great distance. Charts, posters, pictures; small, improved livestock, such as goats and fowl; simple and better implements, such as light iron plows and good cultivators; samples of seeds for field and garden crops, are included. It also carries an earth augur to demonstrate the making of latrines, for most Indian villages are as yet entirely without sanitation; tools for model manure pits; a trunkful of books on agricultural subjects to serve as reference library; similar simple and useful books and pamphlets for sale. There is a medicine chest, with much-needed but simple remedies; a gramophone to provide music and entertainment; a magic lantern and a

movie projector with a special electric generating unit; not to mention electric light bulbs, in order to enable the school to work at night.

The school makes a stop for from three to ten days in a given place, depending on the size, and the interest shown. Sometimes it serves as headquarters for a bazaar demonstration. It is on the move nearly all the time except during the monsoon season, and crowds surround it always.

Rural reconstruction—that is the theme of the hour in missionary conferences. In 1930 the late Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield, previously president of Massachusetts Agricultural College, went to India to confer with missionaries in an effort to find a really constructive strategy for the future. As a result of his visit, special studies have been made of village life, and the reports shared with all denominations. The experiments at Sangli, Martandam, and other centers have been made available for all. A Rural Life Conference, held annually, has met a great need. The leaders of the modern rural movement are seeking to rebuild village life and give it a new impetus—the glory of every personality in the sight of God; the dignity of every family, whatever its caste. The new purpose of rural reconstruction in the mind of the Christian church, therefore, is to reform village life on these new lines, and with this new spirit.

All the agencies of the Christian church may be brought to bear in the process. The church leads in this endeavor to touch the life of the individual by making his village really a place to live in, instead of a spot to die in. It is thus working for the kingdom of God among country people.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *His Home Life Is Happy*

DINABANDHU CAN LOOK BACK WITH DELIGHT UPON HIS village home. One of his earliest memories is of his grandfather, upon whose shoulders he so often rode triumphantly forth "to admire and see the world so wide," and whose gifts of sweets and toys, often made by his own skillful fingers, brought the thrills and surprises of boyhood. Unlike their Hindu neighbors, Dinabandhu's father and mother and the children did not live in the grandfather's house; for his father's work took him away from the old home where the uncles and aunts and their many children all lived together beneath the same roof.

Pictures crowded into Dinabandhu's mind when he thought of home—pictures and sound memories. There was one of his sister learning to cook, while his mother patiently laid before her the necessary ingredients, taught her to dole out the spices, and to estimate the amount of food for each person. He could see his mother bending over the little chests and brass cases, measuring out the curry and rose leaves with swift motions of her lovely hands, and hear the chop-chop as she cut up the eggplant and chilies and mustard, holding the chopping board with her feet and bringing the vegetables down upon the curved knife.

There was a picture of his mother teaching them their table manners; of her flexible right hand as she deftly took a *chapati*, or thin bread cake, from the pile on the brass plate, broke off a small portion, and, using it as a scoop, made a little ball of rice and curry, never getting her fingers soiled above the first knuckle, and never using more than three fingers; and then popped it into her mouth without dropping even one drop.

There was a picture of his mother's shining array of brass cooking pots and little Indian lamps, beautiful in the sunlight, as his little sisters polished them with ashes or sand.

He could remember his mother's songs at grinding time—some of them plaintive, of long hard work done day after day, till the back broke; but some of them merry little songs. There was a memory of one day when his father came home from a journey, bringing his mother wonderful presents, and of how all the neighbors gathered around to help light a Western-style lamp, and, still more wonderful, to examine a stove which it took his mother a long time to learn to use but which made her work so much easier than had the charcoal brazier.

There were memories, too, of men's talk on the veranda to discuss the events of the village, the latest new-fangled idea of the government, or the terrible pressure of the money-lender, who held one of their neighbors in a strangle grip from which he could not escape. After Dinabandhu's little boyhood was past, he was always admitted to these conferences of the men, in which his mother never took part, unless she was called by her husband for some special question having to do with women's ways.

It was a surprise to Dinabandhu later when his school

friends spoke critically of the marriage system of India, and he began to realize that his home was not typical of all India, but only a very lucky sample of the Christian home at its best. When one of the Y.M.C.A. leaders invited a group of the boys to his home for an evening, they eagerly accepted, for his marriage was known to be a love match, and he and his wife had built up a charming home in an apartment of the very most modern type.

Dinabandhu and his friends were interested in every detail of apartment life. They explored the kitchenette and modern bathroom, while some of the boys asked surprising questions. "But where does your mother-in-law live?" "Does your father send you the money to maintain this place?" "I should think it would be hard for the family to keep up more than one residence." "There isn't any place for pounding the spices and the grain." "Don't you find it hard not to have a whole family to help you with the work?"

Their hostess explained the apartment house ways, so different from those of her own country home, told how in the city they could not count on grinding out their own spices, pounding their own grain into flour, or preparing so much of the food from the beginning. They must often fall back on packaged goods and canned things.

"You see," she said, "we of India can profit by the best things of the West, though we have some things to give them, too. There is much to be said for our old marriage system," she went on. "I miss the hullabaloo of my Indian home. A city apartment is a lonely place. But I'm glad to have a chance to be with my husband in his work here. We should hate to have to return ignominiously to the support of the family, but

there is no denying the fact that that old family system is insurance and protection for us all—isn't it?"

Then they were off full swing into one of their favorite arguments. How must the household system and the marriage customs be modified for this new day, and to what extent could Christianity help to influence changes in that system?

### *The Indian Family and Marriage*

What Dinabandhu found out we also must understand if we are to know India. An Indian family is a great patriarchal clan, where the good of the individual is submerged in the good of the family, whose name must be protected from dis-honor, maintained in prosperity, and continued even into eternity by its sons and grandsons and great-grandsons. To carry on this family name, sons are a necessity. But in a country where, from climate and poverty and lack of sanitation, disease is so prevalent and so terrible in its mortality, it may be difficult to bring sons to manhood. So as soon as a boy gets to the marriageable age his mother begins to think about securing for him a wife and grandsons for the family.

Moreover, all the branches of the family keep together. If one son dies, his children are the natural responsibility of the rest of the household. They are all brought up together in what Dinabandhu's hostess so aptly called a "hullabaloo." It may be a happy and companionable household, or a hard and bitter one; but it will be a large family in which brothers and sisters and cousins are indiscriminately mixed, so that often a boy of Dinabandhu's age will have a rather vague notion as to which of the family are cousins and which are brothers.

The oldest male member of the family is distinctly the head

of the household. When the grandfather dies, his oldest son attains to the supremacy, and must be consulted on all family affairs. Into his hands goes the money of the family, and from him come all the expenses and disbursements.

For generations the Hindu child marriage system has been the object of pity and condemnation from the world. Yet to the Indian there is much real sense in it. He argues that a girl has to make her home in her husband's family, and the younger she goes, the more completely her roots will be planted in the new household. She must be trained in the ways of her mother-in-law, able to carry on the family worship, cook the family dishes, know all the family customs and personalities, and lose her will in the welfare of the family.

The marriage of very young children is really little more than an official betrothal, though so binding that the girl is classed as a widow if the boy dies. It is only made into a real marriage when the girl reaches the age of ten or eleven. A law of 1930, the famous Sarda Act, requires that she be fourteen, but its enforcement is impossible as yet among many sections of the population.

There are many different ceremonies observed in different parts of India for the actual marriage, but all are similar. Horoscopes are studied; the dowry is settled; a commission is paid to the family priest, who recites the names of the girl's father and grandfather, and then the names of the young husband's father and grandfather, thus transferring the girl from her family to his. Their garments are tied together, the boy's *dhoti* to the girl's *sari*, with hard, firm knots; and they walk together seven times around the sacred fire. The red mark of marriage is set upon the girl's forehead, sometimes by the

Brahman, sometimes by the mother-in-law, sometimes by the young husband. The Brahman then throws rice over them, that the union may be fertile.

There is usually a procession. Even a poor family must hire musicians, and the girl is drummed and piped all the way to her new home. There are feastings and alms-giving and the exchange of expensive gifts, the cost of which has brought many a family to bankruptcy or into bondage to the money-lender for years to come.

### *New Days, New Ways*

I attended a conference of Indian young people where discussion very like that of Dinabandhu and his friends took place. Suddenly one of the boys turned to me with the question: "Did you ever know a love marriage in your country that was successful?"

"Yes," I said in some surprise. "Yes, I have."

"Really a love marriage? And really successful?"

"Yes!"

"Did both parties choose their own mates?"

"Yes," I said, still more surprised.

"The girl as well as the boy?" he demanded.

"Oh, yes, yes!" I said promptly, for on this I had no doubt.

"The girl as well as the boy."

There was a silence in the room while they looked at each other. Then one boy said: "Aren't they lucky!"

Yet in the subsequent discussion it became clear that there were a number of stout defenders for the Indian way. Had our system in the West worked so well after all? Was marriage so genuinely successful? Could they not point to, and

must we not admit, a great many failures? Was it not true that many a young man and woman had chosen very badly? Might it not be better to choose according to the family backgrounds and experience? Were not marriages broken in our country by differences of religion, national origin, or social background?

What modifications, then, does young India think necessary? The first change must be in the patriarchal family. Girls say: "I think that when I am married I shall want to go with my husband to a home of our own and not to his father's house. I should like freedom to bring up my children in the way I may choose." Boys agree that only so is change and progress possible.

The second calls for certain new standards of selection. A boy wishes a wife who can read and write, take part in community life, accept new ways as they come; one who will perhaps go with him to the movies or to lectures—who will at least go with her daughters or her sisters-in-law—and then be able to discuss them with him afterwards. He wants a girl who has had the same kind of education he has had, and who shares the same tastes; one who has had some athletic life, who glimpses modern science, sanitation, and hygiene, which to old-style India are comparatively unknown. He will very likely demand a civil marriage and a less expensive ceremony.

In the third place, young India wants a chance to be consulted in the choice of a mate. He may leave the final decision to his parents, may wish them to take the initial steps; but he wants to have something to say in making the decision. The beginnings of coeducation in India naturally make it

more possible for boys and girls to meet on a footing of equality and understanding.

### *The Indian Home*

It would be hard to give any one picture of an Indian home that would fit all India. Naturally, in a country of so many backgrounds and religions, the customs and ways vary. In a section where Islam predominates, for example, Hindu and Moslem homes alike observe very carefully the rules of *purdah*—that is, seclusion of the women folk; whereas in the homes of South India even the costume is worn differently, with head uncovered and face open to the gaze of the passer-by, while women go where they like, in and out of the market place and bazaar, visiting in each other's homes, to church, to temple, and to school.

Homes vary according to the wealth or poverty of the family, as in any country. The outcaste's hut may be only a hovel, badly thatched, with one room and no windows. Between that little hut and the tall city house of three or four stories, there are different grades of Indian homes. The most common type for a fairly "good" family will be approached by a gateway in a high wall. Within there may be one, two, or three courtyards, each a rectangular open space with verandas on three sides. The outer courtyard contains the quarters for the animals in a village home, and the general, more public, living quarters, through which one passes into an inner courtyard where the women of the family have their daily life, much of it in good weather in the courtyard and on the verandas.

In the rooms are chests, gaily painted, in which the family treasures are kept, and an indefinite number of cot-like beds,

called *charpoys*. Each bed is made of light rope or wide webbings, strung taut on a frame having four low corner posts. If guests come, several of these are brought out from the interior of the house to the veranda, and serve as chair, divan, or bed, as need may demand.

In the homes of the rich there are fine hangings, luxurious rugs and tapestries, pictures and bric-a-brac, tables of many types, and chests and boxes of brass, lacquer, rare wood, copper, or inlaid precious stones. In the home of a more average family there are one or two simple hangings, perhaps a collection of mats on which people may sit. Flowers are used to some extent for decoration. The walls may be painted by hand in bright designs; a gay parrot or song-bird in a painted cage will add to the color.

In a town or city house the roof takes the place of the village veranda. A man coming home from his day's work will mount swiftly up the dark, steep stairs, and command his wife to bring his food there instead of serving it in the stuffy, crowded little rooms below.

Half the color and life of an Indian home are in the costumes, and much of the family treasure is in the jewelry of the women. Many Indian men feel that their money is safer in this form than in any other. So, as the Indian woman goes about, there is the tinkle of glass and the sound of metal from ankles, toes, arms, wrists, fingers, neck, ears, and nose. The simplest peasant family can afford a few glass bangles for its daughters, and copies the more expensive jewels of the rich in a white metal that looks almost like silver, or brass which looks almost like gold. A birthday or a special holiday is a time for a new *sari* or a new pair of glass bangles or earrings;

and the worst punishment that a father can inflict upon his child in some parts of India is to break her bangles.

In North India the Moslem women wear long trousers, baggy above the knees and tight below, and of all colors and all textures, from heavy muslin or cotton to the loveliest of swishy taffeta. Those Moslem women who are strict in their observance of *purdah* wear when they go into the streets a flowing garment called a *burka*, which completely envelops them from head to foot, leaving only a small aperture for their eyes. The *sari*, which is the most characteristic garment of the Indian woman, varies by geography and custom. Generally it is six or eight yards long, more than a yard wide, and makes the complete dress, except for a little jacket-blouse made of fine muslin or all-over embroidery, or of gay silk or brocaded satin. The *sari* for every day is made of colored cottons, but the dress-up *sari* for special occasions is of the gayest of hand-woven silks, often decorated with a broad border of gold.

There is much less of the conventional false modesty of the West. A little girl often wears a very full skirt of bright green or cerise, reaching to her ankles, and above it nothing but jewelry; or, if the weather is cool, a little jacket-like waist of a different bright color. In most parts of India, by the time she is seven or eight she will put on an exact duplicate of her mother's costume.

India's men and boys are not afraid of color, either. We see turbans of every shade and hue and every fabric; *dhotis* of finest quality muslin, held in place by girdles of bright colors, sometimes a sheer Kashmir wool shawl, equally bright, folded and slung jauntily across the shoulder. Small boys wear em-

broidered caps, purple covered with gold, or blue with bead-work. Today in the city many men are adopting Western dress, while young India has accepted Gandhi's program of *khaddar*, or native homespun; but even in the *khaddar* cloth they are beginning to introduce color.

In the Indian home the life of the family revolves about the father's interests and desires. When he comes home at the end of a day's work, the shouting and laughter in the household stop; his wife springs to do his bidding, waiting upon him with dexterous movements.

"O mother of my son, let me tell you how it went with me in the market place today." Thrilled with the unusual attention he is paying her, she will stand at responsive attention, giving him the oh's and ah's of admiration at his prowess that he feels to be his due. Meanwhile the other women of the family move away from the center of the stage to pursue their activities in silence or in whispers, careful not to interrupt him or to make any racket which would disturb him in his evening meal. Yet there may be real affection and mutual enjoyment between the husband and wife and between the father and his children; and many Indian women have achieved quiet happiness in married life.

There is something very beautiful in the life of the best type of Hindu home, and that beauty lies in the devotion and complete self-sacrifice of the women of the family. In *India Looks to Her Future*, Dr. Oscar M. Buck reminds us that Indian womanhood has been trained through the years after the pattern of two great princesses of Hindu literature—Sita and Savitri—known and loved by every little Hindu girl. They furnish the ideals for a Hindu wife.

Any missionary will tell you that the Hindu woman at her best is not far from the "kingdom of God," that Hindu women brought up on Sita and Savitri are hard-grained wood that takes a high Christian polish. . . . India's womanhood, finer than its manhood because of its age-long self-discipline, its refinement in hotter fires, is abundantly worthy to be provided with any oil you may have in your lamps, so that it, too, may rise with joy to greet the oncoming Christ and all he brings with him.<sup>1</sup>

For the Christian home today is somewhat different. Says Dr. Buck:

When I sit in an Indian Christian home I see some things that are not typical of Indian home life as it has been through the centuries. Here is comradeship in the midst of simplicity. . . . I have felt that the establishment of one such Christian home in India is worth all the missionary offerings of all the churches for that year. Not all Christian homes in India are such, any more than all Christian homes in America are such; but when Christ has made so many Indian homes happier, it should be our eager task to open other doors to his entering presence.<sup>2</sup>

For the Indian woman Christianity is the one religion which speaks directly to her heart words meant for her, of a God who may be addressed as "Father," who broke through into human life in visible form in such a way as to make motherhood forever sacred, and even a woman a revered personality. Dinabandhu's mother, as a Christian woman, has a responsibility in her community that no priest or prophet can carry so well as she.

The Christian woman can penetrate the seclusion of *purdah* and bring new joy and life and light into its trivial and monotonous

<sup>1</sup> *India Looks to Her Future*, by Oscar MacMillan Buck, pp. 161, 165. New York, Friendship Press, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

onous round. The church has trained many such women for loving service in Hindu or Moslem homes. All the women of the household gather eagerly about the Bible-woman or teacher. She may give a first lesson in reading and writing, using the charts as the simplest method; or she may unfold a marvelous poster picture and tell a story. She may come just in the nick of time to prescribe some simple remedy for a baby in convulsions or a woman in agony. She may sing one of the lovely songs of Christianity, and, having taught it to the household till they can sing it for themselves, she will move on to another home, saying as she goes: "Now when I come next time I will teach you another, and you must sing me this one." Something to think about all the week—"Tara, what was that little song the Jesus woman taught us? Sing it for me again. . . . There, now, doesn't she do well? The Bible-woman will be pleased with her when she comes next time."

Among the greatest gifts of Christianity to India's womanhood have been the woman doctor and nurse, and the fine hospitals to which even the most old-fashioned father may dare to take his daughters or his wife, for *purdah* is strictly observed and the patients are treated by women. Added to these are baby clinics, orphanages, homes for women in distress, hostels for school girls, women's colleges, schools for married women. A long list of illustrious names could be added to the honor roll: Christian women of East and West who have served the women and children of India—such names as Isabella Thoburn, Dr. Ida Scudder, and Dr. Gurubai Kharmarkar, to mention but a few of them.

Probably no woman has done as much to bring before the

Western world the wrongs and sufferings of India's women as Pandita Ramabai.

Her life of service, her demonstration of the possibilities for even despised widows, made a definite change in the whole policy of Hinduism, and have today resulted in movements for the uplift of women and children, laws for the protection of persecuted child widows, and social service institutions for women. Some of India's liberal women have called Ramabai "the apostle of a brighter India." In 1919 the British government awarded her the Kaiser-i-Hind medal for distinguished service to Indian education, but no medal could do justice to her living Christian personality, her love of beauty, her sense of humor. "I suppose the secret of her bigness," wrote one of her friends, "of her glorious humanity, and of her power, was that she was so wholly given to God that there was left in her no room for self. She had deliberately laid aside a great, a unique career for the joy of serving."<sup>1</sup> In her we see what India's womanhood may become when the love of Christ has lighted their Indian lamps.

<sup>1</sup> *Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati*, by Clementina Butler. Used by permission of the publishers, Fleming H. Revell Co.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### *He Goes to School in the City*

**I**T WAS A GREAT DAY FOR DINABANDHU WHEN HE RECEIVED THE news that he had passed all his entrance examinations, won a scholarship, and was really going up to the city to the Christian school. Although he had often been to the middle-sized town of his own district with his father for shopping, he had never experienced the thrill of being in a really large city, and he was excited at the prospect.

His introduction was of course bewildering. He could see no rhyme or reason in the speed or direction of the vehicles. Two-wheeled *tongas* jostled Rolls-Royces; hand-carts darted around Mack trucks. It was his first experience, too, of pavements and sidewalks, and it was some time before he got used to the fact that people kept in a separate section of the roadway and crossed only on signal from the policemen. There were thousands of bicycles, which must be crushed, he thought. Yet it was not long before he too had his bicycle and was riding gaily up and down the streets.

As he went for the first time to the school where he was to live and work for the next few years, he passed through the most colossal Indian bazaar he had ever seen. Market day in the biggest county seat in his district had not been as exciting as this. There were shops upon shops for every conceivable

need of man: the money-lender's, the goldsmith's, the grain merchant's, the druggist's. And of course, in and about them all, the shifting, changing crowd, Eastern and Western: orange turbans, white sun helmets, red petticoats, bright green jackets, purple sashes, khaki uniforms, embroidered hats, and always brilliant jewelry, especially bangles and exotic nose rings giving an effect of coquettishness to partly veiled faces.

On the street corners, along the sidewalks, and in the road even, were all kinds of venders, strolling and shouting their wares—a varied array, from the confectioner's traveling stand to the Wrigley's chewing gum boy dressed in the costume of the Wrigley arrow and passing out samples to the people.

Dinabandhu found even more surprising the stores of Western merchants, with their plate glass windows looking to Indian eyes so colorless from the street, but with such a bewilderment of aisles and tables and counters when one went inside. It was interesting to see the gadgets and materials of the West, though Dinabandhu never adopted Western dress in his own country, as so many of his school friends did.

But there were many other things besides shops in Dinabandhu's new city: the telegraph and the telephone, the radio headquarters, the bus terminal, the airport; all were interest spots to which the school went on pilgrimage. In every section of the city there were moving picture houses, blaring forth a medley of Western and Eastern sounds, and with glittering posters at the doors. Here and there were Indian theatres where long five-, six- and seven-hour performances of Indian plays were attended by enthralled audiences.

Dinabandhu's school was in a lovely campus belonging to the city yet set apart from it. Here flowed the life of an Indian

boarding school of the twentieth century, in which five or six hundred boys were being prepared for leadership in their own land. Most of them were preparing for college, and for such professions as government, medicine, the ministry, and law. Some, however, were getting ready to go back at once to their fathers' occupations in the village from which they came.

Being a Christian boarding school, great emphasis was put on service, and teachers tried to set before the boys a picture of their whole country and its needs. In the great city around them they were helped to see a cross-section of India and what they could do about it. In particular the school made them very conscious—so conscious that Dinabandhu could never forget it—of the horror and poverty of the Indian slum. Dinabandhu had never dreamed of such squalor.

Here in the slums, the streets, glistening under the hot sun of India's tropical climate, were so narrow as to be stifling. There were no trees, only great crowded *chawls*, or tenements, in sharp contrast to the beautiful public buildings and the wonderful residences gleaming like clear alabaster, which Dinabandhu had seen along the tree-lined roads in other parts of the city. In these filthy *chawls* lived industrial workers of all kinds, so necessary to the city's very existence. He was not surprised when he found out that seventy per cent of the population of the city lived in one-room tenements, with an average of four persons in each, and many of the single-room apartments occupied by two families.

Here in the slums were sweat shops which he saw with his sociology class one day, where harassed mothers worked, embroidering caps or stringing garlands, while babies to whom a little bit of opium had been given to keep them quiet lay

covered with flies, neglected and emaciated, on the floor in the midst of the dirt.

After that he was often sick at the thought of the thousands of hungry and suffering people whom one night's pleasure or foolishness of the city's well-to-do would feed for a whole week or more. In the school the boys talked a lot about these things, debating them in classes, discussing them in clubs, facing them quite realistically in their Youth League, and now and then being given a chance to go out and help in the relief of misery in practical ways.

Dinabandhu and his classmates were particularly delighted to have a share in the activities of the neighborhood house. This splendid Christian center was organized in the first place by gifts from churches in America, and the head of it was a missionary; but more and more Indians had come into the leadership of it, and now Indian funds were being increasingly used for its support.

This neighborhood house gave the students some fine experience in surveying conditions in the city, in boys' clubs, in Sunday school, and in the clinic. Their Youth League put on plays, too, and helped with socials, or took part in athletic events and tournaments. The sociology class often took its discussions over to the neighborhood house to consider them with the leaders there. For this house served a mixed population and brought into a real community life Moslem and Hindu, high caste and low caste, Jew and Christian, Parsee and Jain. It taught them to live together for the good of India; not separately, each living for its own interest.

Here were playgrounds for grown-ups and for children, game rooms, movies, a public lecture hall, reading rooms,

night school, dispensaries, free employment service, a Sunday morning forum, and above all a splendid school for social work. In nine months, the director told them, seventy-seven thousand people had been served in one way or another.

Moving along in the same direction as the neighborhood house were other great constructive lines of service: the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, with gymnasiums, hostels, classes, industrial centers, all with splendid leaders.

All these seemed to express a new India. So, when the work in current events or sociology gave the slightest excuse, *Dinabandhu* was glad to go out with groups to wander about in the life of the city and find out at first-hand what was going on and how best to help.

In the list of the hundred largest cities in the world India has four, two of them with a population of over a million. Yet, surprisingly, only forty cities in the land have over one hundred thousand, and only ten per cent of the population is urban, as against fifty-six in the United States. Each of the great cities has a personality of its own, and each has been described in glowing terms by enthusiastic visitors: Bombay, "the Chicago of the East," noted for color and commerce; Calcutta, India's premier political and commercial city; Benares, the "holy of holies," visited every year by thousands of tourists and a million Hindu pilgrims; Delhi, seven capitals in one; Lahore, vigorous and progressive, the leading student center of India; Madras, so tropically beautiful, yet with such an air of freedom and intellectual vigor, where India's rate of literacy is highest; and other names just as famous—Lucknow, Karachi, Hyderabad.

In the last twenty years or so a new conscience has been awakening in India, as in all lands, to the responsibility of the privileged for the non-privileged; and the responsibility of the owner of a business for the conditions in which his workmen live. So India's cities are developing many types of social organization, reconstructive ones as well as relief projects. Among the most significant of these are the housing experiments designed to eliminate the sort of slums that Dina-bandhu saw, such as the model *chawls* built by the Improvement Trust of Bombay; the progressive experiment of the Tata Company in another city; and two mill communities at Cawnpore, where the little villages provided for the mill workers are self-governing and are equipped with modern welfare work, with playground activity, and with schools and hospitals.

The Christian missionary has often shared with the enlightened industrial leader and government official in the activity that produced these experiments. Occasionally, too, a missionary or Christian pastor has been assigned a special task, working in close connection with mill operatives, understanding their problems, going with them through the hardest experiences which labor must meet, and even acting as intermediary at times of stress and tension.

One of the leading Christian activities in the city has been the furnishing of hostels both for industrial workers and for students. In some cities the development of government high schools and colleges has made it unnecessary for Christian missions to continue their own boarding schools of high school grade, and they have transferred their energy to the maintaining of a hostel, where groups of students may live to-

gether in a real home with Christian background. This has proved to be a much-needed form of service, especially for girls, very few of whom could be sent away either to school or college unless there were a place where they might live, protected and mothered under Indian tradition.

From one such hostel letters have come, written by Indian girls of high school age to friends in America who are willing to share them with us. We have room for excerpts from but two such letters; but they give us an interesting glimpse of city life and school life through the eyes of an Indian girl who might well be one of Dinabandhu's sisters.

I would like to give you some information about my native place and myself. This year I am going to appear for the matriculation examination. Our examination begins on the first of March and goes on for about three weeks. We have to take five subjects. I have taken the following: English, vernacular (Marathi), history and elementary geography, hygiene and sewing, mathematics, and botany. My school is called the St. Ursula Girls' High School. There are seven classes; three are on one side of the building and four on the other side. There is a big hall which is used for prayer. In the middle there is a beautiful garden in which there is a fountain.

I live in Nagpur, which is a pleasant place. There are four public gardens and a park. There are four tanks, two of them used for drinking purposes, one for the mills, and the other for swimming. There are schools for boys. There are colleges, the Women's College, the Science College, Morris College, the Law College, and the College of Agriculture. There is a big university library near the Law College. There is also a handicraft school, and a health school. There are two big hospitals for women, and a men's hospital called the Mayo Hospital. Nurses are trained in the hospitals. There are two cotton mills in which thousands of men are employed, and there are big shops.

I was very glad when I got the opportunity of writing to you about my country. I have been living in Nagpur for the last four years. Nagpur is the capital of the Central Provinces. It is a very big city. There is a very big Christian congregation, and its work is in great progress.

In our high school there are nearly three hundred girls, and we have nine women teachers and two men teachers. We enjoy our school days very much. Our school begins at ten o'clock in the morning and stops at three-thirty in the afternoon. When we have game periods we play badminton, deck tennis, and tennis. We get three big vacations, one in the hot weather, another for Christmas, and the third for Diwali, which is the great Hindu festival. Also now and then we get odd holidays for some Hindu festivals.

In Diwali, Christmas, and the hot weather vacations I go to Bhandara where my father and mother live. My father is a minister. It is nearly forty miles away from Nagpur. There are five girls from Bhandara with me in this school. Sometimes we go by bus and sometimes by train. Bhandara looks very beautiful when the grain is growing in the fields. Though there are no big gardens and buildings to interest us, yet I like that place very much.

Now our Christmas holidays are drawing very close and so the girls as well as the teachers are very busy, because the girls are going to act a play before the holidays. We are very much eager to see it being acted.

Really we enjoy ourselves very much in this hostel as well as in our school. I feel very sad when I think that I will have to leave this school after my examination, which is going to begin on the first of March.

I am very anxious to know about you. What do you do, and how do you spend your days? I hope you will not feel tired or uninterested while reading my letter, and also I hope that I shall get a letter from you soon.

## CHAPTER NINE

### *His Math Teacher Is a Hindu*

FROM THE TIME WHEN DINABANDHU WAS A SMALL BOY, HE had known that the Christian group to which he belonged was but a small island in the midst of a great lake of Hinduism, and that the majority of the community were called Hindus. He had seen mothers hurrying to the temple or shrines in the early dawn with little bowls of hot fried cakes or little jars of *ghi*; <sup>1</sup> had seen the religious processions, when the priests, with garlands about their necks and the marks of their gods on their foreheads, carried the images from the temple out for an airing on the holy days. He had heard the music at funerals and at weddings, but had never understood it. The names of the many gods and goddesses, which his little Hindu neighbors used as by-words or for story heroes, were just names to him.

But on the first day of school in the city he went into the mathematics class to find seated behind the desk a very distinguished-looking Indian gentleman with the mark on his forehead which indicated that he had performed his temple worship; and Dinabandhu knew at once that he was a Hindu.

"But how do they happen to have a Hindu in a Christian school?" he asked.

<sup>1</sup> Clarified butter.

"That's easy," said one of the boys. "In the first place, they wanted to get the very best math prof they could find. And in the second place, they thought it was good for us to know an educated Hindu. Do you know any Hindus well? I don't. If we're going to live and work in a Hindu community, we might better know some of the right ones, don't you think?"

As Dinabandhu became acquainted with this fine man, to whom the symbols of geometry and the facts of mathematics were a game and a delight, and who even knew how to make them so to restless schoolboys, they talked informally and one day conversation led to the Vedas.

"We've got to get back to the Vedas," said Professor Iyer. "Caste and superstitious worship and child marriage are underbrush grown up within the Hindu forest. The great trees are the old teachings of the fathers, probably the oldest religion in the world."

Then the professor explained to Dinabandhu the five Vedic rules: non-violence, truth, self-control, simplicity of living, and freedom from material possessions. Dinabandhu found it hard to connect the idealism of his professor with the many little gods and goddesses he had seen in the shrines. How had those fine principles ever led people into such worship?

One day the professor invited several boys to his home and showed them his especially valuable books, the ancient Upanishads and the two great volumes which correspond to the Iliad and the Odyssey of the Greeks—the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The Mahabharata is a great epic poem containing what even Western students have called a "little jewel," the Bhagavad-Gita or "The Song of the Blessed One."

On one interesting afternoon his teacher took a group of

the students to a Hindu theatre to see some of the Ramayana acted on the stage. In the professor's library he became acquainted with the great poets of India's past and present—Tulsi Das and Tukaram, Kalidas, Shankara, and Tagore.

### *What Is Hinduism?*

Dinabandhu's introduction to the ancient literature of Hinduism must serve for us, also, as we begin to understand the religion of these 239,000,000 people. What is it to be a Hindu? That is one of the hardest things in the world to define.

Unlike Islam and Christianity, Hinduism has no founder. It is really the caste system rather than a person or belief that makes Hinduism and holds it together. In these twenty-five hundred or so compartments which make up Hinduism, we have the real motive that keeps a man true to the faith of his fathers. The caste in which he is born holds him to his duty.

The many castes of Hinduism are grouped within four great divisions: the Brahman, which is the priestly class at the top; the Kshatriya, noble and warrior castes; the Vaisya, which includes all the merchant and artisan castes; and the Sudra, or peasant castes. The first three are known as the "twice-born" castes, for a man is said to be born again when he is initiated into the caste of his family. At the time of initiation a sacred thread as symbol is put over his right shoulder, across the body to the waist on the left side; and a ritual is performed by the priest before the family and guests. The Sudras are only once-born and never may wear the sacred thread. Then below them are the outcastes never born at all in the eyes of the Hindu, on whom rest the lowly and degrading tasks.

Apart from caste, which, as we have seen, is a combination

of racial exclusiveness, occupational privileges and duties, social code, and religious denomination, Hinduism is fundamentally an attitude toward life. Nothing in the world—success, personal satisfaction, material possessions, even health—is as important as the religious life. And in the ritual of every family we see religious attitudes and rites influencing every act of life, and every man bound by the duties of religion.

But for the average bewildered Westerner, looking at this complex, philosophical, and confusing medley which makes up Hinduism today, it will perhaps simplify matters to indicate that there are really two Hinduisms: the religion of the common people and their priests, and the religion of the philosophers and educated men.

### *The Religion of the Common People*

From the early worship of sun, moon, and stars, and eventually of a God which they felt to be behind sun, moon, and stars, Hinduism has been developed into a priest-centered religion, with a professional class, the Brahmans, set apart for the performance of religious duties. The duty of the average person is to worship in temple, shrine, and home, follow the caste rules, and pay homage to his ancestral gods.

The religious leaders might think such noble thoughts as those in the Bhagavad-Gita, that "the spiritual man may achieve union with the Divine Life in the midst of worldly affairs, becoming one with the Eternal by the subdual of all outgoing energies, the harmonizing of all the constituents of man's life, till they vibrate in perfect attunement with the one, the Supreme Self." But to the average man or woman, boy or girl, that was all very difficult, and God seemed a long way

off. They could see divine power evidenced in certain forces of nature, both those that destroyed and those that preserved life. These forces they made personal in lesser gods, more real to them than Brahma. For them they built shrines and developed worship with images to represent the god. To the very ignorant the image even seemed to *be God*.

In a similar way, from the age-old dependence upon the cow and ox for milk and for the work of the fields, cattle came eventually to be regarded as sacred. The result has been an economic drain upon poverty-stricken people, for millions of cows and oxen that have ceased to be of any benefit to the people must be fed and protected. To kill a cow and use the meat is to the Hindu an extreme form of sacrilege.

In different parts of India and in different castes there are favorite gods and goddesses worshipped locally. Large sects covering nearly all of India have grown up around the worship of two of these in particular: the Shaivas, or worshippers of the god Shiva; and the Vaishnavas, or worshippers of Vishnu.

Naturally the legends which cluster around the god Shiva and his queen Parvati have their roots in historic events and natural phenomena which the Hindus wish to explain. He is usually considered the god of destructive force. Vishnu, on the other hand, is called the Preserver, and stands for the processes of conservation in nature and in life. He is the Deliverer, too, and in trouble the prayers of a burdened people ascend to him. He appeared among men nine times, according to Hindu popular belief, incarnated in some tangible form to save the people from flood, famine, evil beings, and powers they could not otherwise conquer.

But even the great gods Shiva and Vishnu needed to be brought still closer to human life, so popular belief has seized upon and dramatized two of the incarnations of Vishnu, the warrior Krishna and Prince Rama—both Vishnu in human form. Krishna is the hero of the Mahabharata; while the tales of Rama and his beautiful wife are told for the inspiration of men, women, and children in the great ancient volume of the Ramayana.

Rama was a royal prince who has become by his adventures the symbol of loyalty, honesty, devotion, perseverance, and courage. The Hindu mother, training her daughters, urges them to be like his lovely princess, Sita, faithful unto death. These stories are told by every mother to her children, acted in every holiday festival, and brought into daily life by family worship. They really express the common human longing for a God in visible form, "like to themselves, yet invincible in the end." Today for many Hindus "Ram" means God, and a very common prayer in distress is "Ram! Ram!"

Early in the morning, the mother in a Hindu family rises to do her daily *puja* (worship). The safety and well-being of her family all day depend on the skill and devotion with which she does it. Much of the worship is done in the home, but there are special feast days and holidays, times of thanksgiving, times of trouble, when she goes to the village shrine or temple. Her husband, too, goes often to the temple, and occasionally to the bank of a near-by river for certain definite rites of ceremonial bathing and purification.

A man or a woman asking a great boon will sometimes offer sacrifice at a shrine and make a promise binding for many years to come. "If thou wilt grant me a son, O Vishnu, I will

give as a sacrifice all my jewels, and next year and every year thereafter I will go on my knees in pilgrimage to the great shrines from here to Mother Ganges, so that all men may know of my gratitude to thee." So unlimited is the sacrificial devotion of the Indian people, that such a vow is always carried out. At the time of the great annual religious festivals, or *melas*, in such holy places as Benares or Allahabad, hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims come to the Ganges to fulfill their vows, and to make offerings in the temples.

### *The Religion of the Philosophers*

It is natural that a religion as old as Hinduism and still claiming so large a proportion of the people of the world should have changed tremendously as man's knowledge of the universe has developed and as India has come into closer contact with other peoples and other great religious prophets.

It is hard, therefore, to pick out one central thread or teaching that is truly Hindu and that could in any sense be considered completely Hinduism. The one most important central thought is, as we have said, belief in Brahma, the Supreme Self, the Eternal. God is the only reality there is. The world has no reality, no worth at all. The greatness of God passes the reach of human thought and language. Indeed, he is unknowable; yet he is manifest in all the gods, so no god, of whatever religion or tribe, is to be despised.

But almost as important is the thought that all good actions of man are rewarded, all evil punished, if not in this life, then hereafter in another birth. A man cannot escape the consequences. If he has been obedient to the gods and kept the laws of his caste, he may be reborn in a higher form; but if he

has broken laws or caste, he may descend in the scale of birth; for man's life—the soul life, that is—is not broken even by death. This teaching is what is known as *karma*. It serves as a moral code, but also as a check on all kinds of welfare. Of what use to lift the outcaste, to help the poor, the maimed? They are but suffering the result of their misdeeds in past existences. It is *karmal*!

Another part of the central teachings of Hinduism is that discipline and devotion are necessary for religious life. One cannot attain unity with the Divine, thus escaping a worthless world, without devoting all one's time and energies to this purpose. This does not mean just going to the temple at the right time, or saying prayers in the right way. It means self-denial, long-continued meditation, forsaking of family and wealth and position, endless study in solitude, or whatever form of discipline seems indicated by a man's own knowledge and his own soul. This, on its discipline side, is called *yoga*.

It is because Hinduism has believed for so long a time that only by leaving the world and its desires can one escape *karma* that India has such great numbers of saints, holy men, and dedicated ones—*sadhus* and *sannyasis*.

But the Hindu philosophers began to realize that they needed a religion which could satisfy not only the holy men or *sadhus* but could bring satisfaction to the educated person in daily life, just as the Christian layman was able to find it in his faith. So modern teachers have concentrated in the last few years on the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita. Here they have found religion for daily living.

Put in its briefest form it is something like this: Union with God may be maintained even in the midst of daily, worldly

affairs. The hindrance that keeps a man from such union with God is not the outside world, but lies within himself. Renunciation of the world is not necessary to find God. Do your duty without thinking of it. Your mind must be on God. Let your work be an offering to God, of no conscious value in itself.

To us this may seem strange, and it is this very teaching, indeed, that makes a man like Jawaharlal Nehru feel that religion is no longer necessary for his country, that it is even a handicap in the attaining of real home rule for India. It cannot be denied that the interpretation of Hinduism which has resulted from the emphasis on the Bhagavad-Gita has, in many cases, led to indifference to the most terrible evils in society. Education, community welfare, the new agriculture, the raising of the untouchable, India's connection with the outside world, all these are not to be considered of importance. A good Hindu of the philosophical school regards such things with no plan and no sense of urgency, since nothing is to be considered important—neither personality, morality, nor human welfare—but his own union with God.

A young Indian Christian once gave me wise words with which to confound a great philosophical, legal mind—with whom I had been having many a religious argument. My young Indian warned me first against argument anyway.

"You never get anywhere by that," he said. "But when he speaks to you again, say this: 'Your religion allows you to be at perfect harmony with God, but to walk unseeing past all the misery of men. Your religion allows you to be at perfect harmony with God, yet to ride your elephant or your Rolls-Royce right over the outcaste, the exploited child, the beggar,

the miserable person in your pathway. Now my religion has never been perfectly lived since its founder's day, but it teaches us the glory of every human being in the sight of God. It teaches us that he who would be great must be servant of all, and that he who would find his place with God must bind up his neighbor's wounds, and work for a world where justice, righteousness, and love are supreme—and there is nothing in all your religion, my friend, that can do that for you.'"

*Saints, Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs*

For her many *sadhus* and holy men India has great respect. Some are teachers and interpreters; some fanatics; some no doubt frauds; many are sincere devotees sacrificing bodily comfort to express their utter devotion to God. They go to all lengths in sacrifice, lying on beds of spikes, torturing the body in many ways, walking as beggars from village to village.

An Indian reformer writes in one of India's newspapers:

India is a land of saints and *gurus*. They are of all kinds and varying values. It is difficult to judge who is sincere and who is a quack. The criminal waste of human life and property which follows from their activities is a positive evil in Hindu society. Their immoral and shameful practices at times shock even a religious person. The really spiritually perfect *guru* and his true disciple are things as rare as Platonic love or benevolent despotism.

The most enlightened Hindus of today voice their religious longings in such prayers as this from the Upanishads:

From the unreal lead me to the Real.  
From darkness lead me into light.  
From death lead me to immortality.

And in this quest for the Real and for light the apostles and true teachers have raised their voices steadily in protest at idol worship. They have started new sects and societies, or even caused whole new religions to be born in reform. The protest became even clearer when Hinduism came into contact with faiths that were strongly monotheistic. The religion of the Sikhs was born from the contact of Hinduism with the Moslem faith. And the contact of Christianity with Hinduism has, as one Indian leader says, "thrown a white light upon the worst features of Hinduism and quickened the search of educated India for God behind the gods."

The prophets, holy men, heroes, and martyrs whom one finds in Hinduism at its best remind us of the words of Jesus: "Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness." No Christian leader has ever followed those words with more renunciation or more self-sacrifice than the devoted mystics and sincere religious teachers of Hinduism. No wonder Hindus make wonderful Christians!

The work of Ram Mohan Roy in the early part of the nineteenth century may be said to have started the present-day reform movements in Hinduism. "The root evil of the whole wretched state of Hindu society is idolatry," he said, and he organized the Brahmo Samaj, or "God Society," designed to keep before the people the oneness of God, as opposed to the many gods of everyday Hinduism.

Persecuted by his family as a heretic in his desperate search for truth, he came in contact with a Christian missionary who

introduced the New Testament to him. "I have found the doctrines of Christ," he wrote to a friend, "more conducive to moral principles and better adapted to the use of rational human beings than any others which have come to my knowledge."

But believing that Christ's disciples misunderstood him, and that Christianity was a mistake, he put the rest of his life into interpreting Christ's teaching *within Hinduism*. His reform movement has gone on to this day, a strong influence in India and Hinduism. Years later, Keshab Chander Sen, sometimes called the Christ-loving leader of the Brahmo Samaj, led another reform movement within that organization, from which in large measure have come the beginnings of such reconstructive movements as the social and intellectual emancipation of women, the marriage acts, and the education of girls.

Mul Shankar, called Dayanand, a Brahman by birth, a banker by inheritance, is often called the "Hindu Protestant." From the time when he ran away from home and became a monk to escape marriage, until his death, he tried to prevent what he believed the Brahmo Samaj stood for: an India and a Hinduism corrupted by the West and influenced by Christianity. The Arya Samaj which he organized in passionate protest stands for two slogans: "Back to the Vedas" and "India for the Indians." The organization's program is religious, social, political, and scientific reform for a reborn India. Much money has been given for its work, and it supports today a network of social agencies. Lala Lajpat Rai, until his recent death a leader in the movement, gave credit for the work wholly to the example of the Christian enterprise, but it has

nevertheless conducted an almost merciless persecution against other faiths and their followers, including Christianity.

### *Hindu Missionaries to the West*

We need to know the more recent prophets through whose work the West has seen Hinduism. Ramakrishna, born Gadar-dhar Chatterji, was a Bengali Brahman who became a *sannyasi* and attracted many followers by his enthusiasm and devotion. One of them, Narendra Nath Dutt, a young college-trained writer, editor, and debater, took the vows of dedication, adopting the name of Vivekananda. Shortly after the death of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda came to America in 1893 for the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, where he made so great an impression that he considered America ripe for the teachings of Ramakrishna and began to organize what were known as the Vedanta Societies. His title here was Swami, equivalent to Reverend with us. For some time the Vedanta Societies in America increased rapidly, and there are a number of them even today, always led by an Indian swami.

In India Vivekananda created the Ramakrishna Mission for medical and social work, and was tireless in its behalf until, as one of the writers of his day says, "he was burned to the socket," and died in 1902, just forty years of age. The ideas he taught were that all religions were true and pathways to the same God; that God was in everything and so good was in everything, even in man's desires. The weakness in this religion was that it was to so great an extent the religion of an easy way when it came to morality. Vivekananda seemed to overlook the fact that Jesus taught a moral as well as loving God: "Let your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the

scribes and the Pharisees." The kind of unflinching ethical choice which is expressed in the temptation of Jesus had no counterpart with these leaders. Nor was there such a thing as human responsibility for evil. "Man can do no wrong, for he is God's child," according to Vedanta teaching, so their rather vague good will fails to command the lives of men today, even when it leads them to philanthropy and service.

### *A Changing-Hinduism*

The prophets and teachers pass in variety, and we can see Hinduism changing, growing to a more deep-seated consciousness of its own problems, its responsibilities for the people and society. College graduates have created the Servants of India Society; social workers have been trained; the Seva Sadan, or "Home of Service," is gathered about the brilliant personality of Rabindranath Tagore. There are the National Social Conference; the All-India Women's Conference; and a number of other reform organizations.

In any religion, the weak spot is often to be found in the lives of the professional group "at the top." And that, sadly enough, is what has happened in Hinduism. The degradation of some phases of temple worship and the spectacle of little temple girls dedicated to the idol have been recognized and courageously attacked by the finest type of Hindu. Hear what Gandhi says on the subject, writing of the temples in Benares:

The approach was through a narrow and slippery lane. Quiet there was none. The swarming flies and the noise made by the shopkeepers and the pilgrims were simply insufferable. Where one expected an atmosphere of meditation and prayer, it was conspicuous by its absence. . . . When I had reached the temple, I was

greeted at the entrance by a stinking mass of rotten flowers. The surroundings of the Well of Knowledge, too, I found to be filthy. If anyone doubts the mercy of God, let him have a look at these sacred places.<sup>1</sup>

Hindu reformers have worked not only against idol worship and temple evils but even more actively to lift the status of women, especially the millions of widows who live, as it were, under a curse. For Hindu custom forbids a widow to remarry and condemns her to a life of self-sacrificing drudgery. For the older woman for whom life is really over in the death of her husband, this is one thing; but it must be remembered that often the widow is a child too young ever to have gone to her husband's home, yet she is just as relentlessly bound to his family. It will take generations, of course, before Hinduism's great voices make themselves heard enough to stamp out either child marriage or the living sacrifice of widows, for both are based on religious convictions too long held to be lightly abandoned on government decree.

In recent years another change has been coming to Hinduism. The outcaste has always been denied entry to the temple. He was a Hindu, yet so "unclean" that he might not approach the central worship house of his faith. Gandhi first, and later other leaders, have talked, agitated, and organized against this "reproach to our very faith itself." At last in 1936 the Maharajah of Travancore issued an official proclamation which opened the state-controlled temples of his land to the outcaste. A formal opening was celebrated, led by the Maharajah himself. *The Epic of Travancore* tells the story of the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Living India*, by Savel Zimand, pp. 67-68. Used by permission of the publishers, Longmans, Green & Co.

eager response of the outcaste, the satisfaction of the leaders, the victory for "right worship" in the name of God who created *all*.

The story is still unfinished. Hinduism is not really won to this new and revolutionary change and its leaders are in rigid opposition; but certainly the religion itself would be purified by the step.

It is doubtful whether any Westerner ever quite understands the faith of the Indian, or how behind apparently blind worship of a material object is a sense of something beyond. "Is this God?" said a Christian from the West to an ignorant village woman, who was offering *ghi* and grain and flowers before a little clay image of weird shape and repulsive form. "Yes," she said swiftly, "God—" and she named the name of the god. And then, as with sudden dawning comprehension—"No, not this—yet he is there—here."

She could not possibly have put it more clearly than that. She was making her offering in practical, tangible form, yet with it who shall say she was not offering a heart in longing and desperate search before the power which to her was represented in the little image? Small wonder that when he comes in Christ, made real by the loving hearts and living hands of his followers, God speaks to India in accents she cannot resist. Said an Indian Christian to me once: "Some day we shall bring you back your Jesus, interpreted as you never dreamed he could be interpreted, for he was an Oriental and we understand him better than you. He is the fulfillment of our souls' greatest longings and our hearts' highest quests."

## CHAPTER TEN

### *He Has a Moslem Classmate*

DINABANDHU HAD LONG BEEN INTERESTED IN MOHAMMED Ali—Ali, for short—the hardest boy in his class to know. When he first came to school the boys were inclined to jeer at him; to describe him as high-hat; and to nickname him “the great Mogul.” He was tall and dignified and rather solemn, though he was friendly enough when you met him.

He proved to be a first-class debater, and a strong member of the All-India Youth League of the school. His patriotism went very deep, and there was a blaze in his eye when he talked about “the motherland” that often made his friends feel small.

One day on a visit to a voting place for a research project Dinabandhu walked with Ali. As they stopped to look at a specimen ballot on which the candidates up for election were announced by descriptive word and picture, Dinabandhu put his finger on one name, opposite which was the phrase “Moslem—Communal Candidate.”

“How are we ever going to get a unified India,” he said hotly, “as long as that goes on? Why should the Moslems have a special candidate? I don’t believe in voting by religion.”

He felt uncomfortable as soon as the words were out.

"For the most part I agree with you," began Ali slowly.  
"But you know, as a Moslem, I see the other side, too."

"I beg your pardon for speaking so quickly," said Dinabandhu. "I hope I haven't hurt you!"

"No," said Ali. "We might as well talk about it. For the only way out must be found by our generation. The great Motilal Nehru said once, if you remember our debating quotations, 'My answer to the Hindu-Moslem problem is that we should let death deal with the superannuated. After the cantankerous old chaps have died out, we shall never again hear of Hindu-Moslem disunity. Thank God for the boys!' I've always remembered," said Ali quietly, "that I'm one of the boys on whom this problem rests."

"I'm afraid," said Dinabandhu regretfully, "I don't know much about it, except what one hears and reads in newspapers."

"Wait till the next festival day," said Ali bitterly, "and I'll show it to you."

A few weeks later Dinabandhu, who had forgotten all about the episode, was invited by Ali to take a walk. They came at last to a very congested district, and turned the corner into what seemed like a young riot—screams, a police siren, the noise of automobiles, and the forceful shouts of police. It was practically over by the time they got there, but they saw enough to get the story.

"It happens at almost every festival," said Ali, "in spite of all the police can do. It's planned way ahead, and it's a criminal blot on India's honor."

Dinabandhu looked with interest at the battered and still fighting participants in the affair. It was the festival of Mu-

harram, the Festival of the Martyrs, celebrated by the Shiite Moslems. Into the midst of their mourning procession there came a little Hindu street band playing as gaily as possible. There was no room for both processions in the street. They were hopelessly mixed up. The rage of the Moslems burst forth. Near-by weapons were seized—sticks and stones—and violence was the result.

"But why should the Hindus do it? That isn't civilized!" said Dinabandhu.

"Of course not," said Ali. "But it works both ways. Last week some of our orthodox Moslems, to annoy their Hindu neighbors, publicly sacrificed a cow. The police had to interfere that time, too, or there'd have been a bad ending."

They walked home for the most part in silence. "Who is doing anything about it?" Dinabandhu asked once.

"Well, there are leaders on both sides who would like to put India first and give up all these things that cause irritation. Hindu processions don't have to play loud music when they pass Moslem mosques, and Moslems can respect their Hindu neighbors' ideas. Gandhiji says unity must come from having a common goal: one great, united, free India. He says: 'Patriotism demands it, and religion compels it. We have to be Indians first, and Moslems or Hindus second.'"

This was the beginning of deep thought on Dinabandhu's part. When he went home the next time, he said to his father: "I'd like to bring Mohammed Ali down for a visit next holiday."

Ali came and the two boys had a grand time together. When they were on their way back to school, Ali said:

"You know, my friend, you are lucky in your hospitality as a

family. We couldn't have our women folks meet men visitors even in my home, which is pretty modern."

"I suppose that's true," said Dinabandhu vaguely.

"You see," Ali went on, "no Moslem woman should be seen by anyone but her immediate family, even today. My mother's oldest sister up country prides herself on never having been out of her home since her marriage. Of course, city customs have changed my father's point of view; and he practically made my mother come out of *purdah*."

"I should think it would feel frightfully stuffy, always having to stay inside like that," said Dinabandhu.

"Yes," said Ali, "it is stuffy. More than that, tuberculosis runs riot, and the death rate among women is sixty per cent higher than among men. In this city from three to five girls die for every one boy in the same age group."

Dinabandhu was fairly open-mouthed at such a statement.

"And that," said Ali fiercely, "is one of the things that the younger generation has to attack. Let me tell you something: barely one and a half per cent of the women in our Moslem community can read and write. The Hindu women aren't so much better, either—only about two per cent of them can. But almost fifteen per cent of your Christian women can read and write. Now that's something to think about! The thing I noticed most at your house was how easily your mother moved around when company came in, and how she entertained those preachers and deacons the other afternoon; and how well she talked with those boys this morning."

Somehow this had never occurred to Dinabandhu before. Proud as he was of his mother, he had always taken it for granted that she could do these simple things.

"I should think a woman doctor or nurse could help that disease problem," he said some time later to Ali.

"Yes," said Ali. "A Christian doctor saved my mother's life a while ago. She simply would not call in a man, but she heard about a clinic at your Christian neighborhood house, with women only as doctors, so she finally ventured to go there. The doctor and nurse afterwards came to the house. I didn't see them, for I was at school, but my mother talked of nothing else for weeks."

In spite of many such conversations Dinabandhu had no real knowledge of Ali's religion till, on his trip into North India, he had a chance to see why Ali carried himself with such pride, why Moslems "made so much more noise" in India than their numbers would justify. In Delhi, late in the twilight, he heard through the open window of his hotel room a musical voice chanting. He stepped swiftly to the window and saw a minaret rising gracefully in the evening sky. On the balcony was the figure of a man, from whom came the sound of the chant. It was strangely moving to Dinabandhu, though he could not understand the words. He knew that it was the Moslem call to prayer, for he had heard it occasionally from the school. Here it sounded more beautiful.

"All over the Moslem world," his uncle reminded him, "at this time and at four other times during the day, the call to the faithful to pray is given."

"It's wonderful," said Dinabandhu. "Do they really do it?"

"Yes, most of them do," said his uncle. "Didn't you notice it on the train? Even on a journey, the really faithful ones spread down their prayer rugs and have their prayer. Tomor-

row I'll take you to the great mosque, one of the most beautiful in the whole world. More people pray to God there than in any one building on the planet, I suspect."

The next day in the Jumma Musjid, the great colonnaded courts were thronged with eager men and boys. Dinabandhu watched while they went through the proper ritual that precedes prayer: cleansing of the face, the mouth, and symbolically the body. When the signal was given, the whole throng of thousands facing toward Mecca, the Holy City, knelt, and for several minutes, in perfect rhythm and accord, they bowed again and again, in the manifold positions required of the good Moslem in prayer.

### *And What Is a Moslem?*

In the days to come Dinabandhu got a very definite impression of the man Mohammed and his religion.

Mohammed was an Arab of good family who, orphaned at six, was thrown much on his own devices, first as herd boy, later as driver and manager of caravans, till he earned the title and fame of "the faithful one." Later, married to a wealthy widow, he had leisure to develop the study of religion in which he had already become interested.

In a vision that came to him one day while he was alone in a cave, he saw the angel Gabriel, who commanded him to write what the Lord wished him to write. Believing that God was leading the people out of their degraded idol worship through him, he began to preach and teach, and disciples came rapidly. Persecution followed. Mohammed fled to Medina, and his flight, or Hegira, as it is called, in A.D. 622 marked the year 1 of the Moslem calendar. In 630 he re-entered Mecca

in triumph, took over the ancient temple, and became virtually master of all Arabia.

In an earlier chapter we saw the spread of Islam after Mohammed's death. In the centuries since then it has largely lost its political power, but still claims the allegiance of 250,000,000 people, one-seventh of the human race.

The greatest secret of success of the Moslem religion has been the simplicity of its requirements and its creed—the briefest creed in the world: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God."

The Koran, the book "dictated to Mohammed by God," is shorter than our New Testament and besides the creed includes stories, laws for family life, rules for national affairs, sermons, exhortations, and warnings. It has some passages so beautiful that they deserve to be read as good literature, but others so trivial that one wonders how the Moslem could read them, much less believe in them.

Two dramatic ties bind the Moslem world of many races together: prayer at the same time all over the world; and the pilgrimage to Mecca, which every Moslem is supposed to manage at some time in his life. In 1934 sixty thousand Moslems arrived in Mecca for the opening day's exercises, of whom twenty-five thousand had come by sea from distant points.

### *Reforms in Moslem India*

But in spite of the simple creed, and the spirit of brotherhood in Islam, there are two great weaknesses. Their faith allows Moslems to live on a low plane of moral life, and prevents their accepting responsibility for the welfare and progress of mankind. They hold that God has determined every-

thing in the world—history, the daily events of a man's life, illness, broken promises, immorality even. So men have rested content with all sorts of evils. How different from Jesus' conception of the kingdom of God on earth!

To meet just these weaknesses great reform movements have risen in Moslem history. Among the most famous was that of Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahhab, who led a strict, puritanical movement in Arabia and whose followers later came to India. One of the best known of the modern Indian reformers was Sir Said Ahmad Khan, who boldly attacked the backward conditions of his people. His greatest achievement was the establishment of the Moslem university of India, Aligarh, which stands to this day as the leading institution for liberal, free, intelligent Moslem leaders. His work roused Moslem India to a new activity and caused the founding of the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference, and later the All-India Moslem League, both aimed at bringing Islam up to date and giving it a place in the political affairs of India.

### *Ali Meets Christ*

Ali attended the chapel services and Christian celebrations of their school though Dinabandhu was often embarrassed to have him there. One day he ventured to speak about it.

"Since you are not a Christian," he said, "have you ever asked the headmaster to excuse you from chapel?"

"But I like it," said Ali in astonishment. "You know we have a great reverence for the prophet Jesus, and many of the passages in the Psalms and the New Testament have been recommended by our prophet Mohammed. I feel better when I have been to chapel. We are both worshippers of God. Only,

of course," said he proudly, "our Prophet came after yours and he is even greater."

In spite of all Dinabandhu could do, he couldn't help feeling irritated at these words, and when he went home for the next week-end he told his father.

"Yes," said his father, "that's a difficult Christian problem—how to help our Moslem brothers find what we have found in Jesus, and the fulfillment he could give to what they have already discovered about God. I'm afraid we have to be pretty humble about that, my son. We haven't done very well at it."

"But haven't there been great missionaries to the Moslems?" asked Dinabandhu.

"Yes, a number of them," said his father. "But perhaps you may be of the generation that will find a new approach to your friend Ali's people."

From the days of Henry Martyn, the great pioneer missionary, there have been many great contributions of personality and character of the West to the East. Christian missions have provided splendid institutions—hospitals, schools, and colleges. A large literature interpreting Christianity to Moslems has been created, and the story of the life of Jesus has entered deep into the soul of many a reader.

Yet, when all has been said and done, comparatively little attention has been given directly to Moslems, since the greater number of Hindus has seemed to call for so much more effort than could ever be put into the service of India. Many of the finest Christian leaders believe the job is still to be done, and that a new strategy is needed. To that end Christian bodies representing several denominations have been developing in the past seven or eight years the Henry Martyn School of

Islamics, to impart real understanding of Islam and its people; to prepare a better Christian literature for use with Moslems; and to provide a teaching center to try out new approaches to Moslems.

The Christian of the present must approach Islam in a spirit of humility. He has a long and dark past to wipe out: the Crusades, the World War, international graft and scandal, the policy of "grab"—all these are associated in the Moslem's mind very often with the words "Christian" and "Christianity." Too often church has meant a place of bigotry or just one further competitive element where the rival claims of saints and even the Mother of Jesus have seemed to the Moslem evidences of just as idolatrous a form of worship as any in the Hindu temple. Nor can we point to society in any nation that is really Christian.

Yet again and again we can show the Moslem, if we will, the Christian church entering fearlessly upon crusades against vice, lifting womanhood, raising childhood into a position of safety and abundant life, promoting education and freedom of thought, and at its best constituting a fellowship that is beyond nationalism and beyond patriotism—a brotherhood as world-wide as Islam. Though we have so poorly demonstrated the Christ whom we serve, we can without fear follow the words which he gave us when he said: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw *all* men unto myself."

The kingdom of God, or the community of God, has yet to be built. In the building of it God needs the Moslem. And we shall yet find in our fellowship earnest and thoughtful men like Ali who have seen God in the face of Jesus, and caught the adventure of following him "till the Kingdom come."

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

*Dinabandhu Is a Christian*

EACH YEAR, AS THE MIDDLE OF DECEMBER DREW NEAR, DINABANDHU was eager to get home. Christmas had always been exciting in his family and though the last few days of the school term were filled with carols and pageants, it was not till he reached his village that he really felt the spirit of it all.

There was a good deal of work for him to do, helping his mother with the younger children of the village church. It was fun to be the returned prodigal with a share in grown-up activities, and he valiantly taught the carols and coached the shepherds and the wise men till he really felt as if it were his "show."

On Christmas morning, long before dawn, while there were still stars in the sky, Dinabandhu and his father rose, dressed in their warmest clothing and slipped out into the chill air—for before the sun comes up even India can be cold. Soon they met a group of the men and boys of the church for carol singing. Dinabandhu's father and the chief musician of the church headed the procession, his father carrying the clappers of brass and wood to beat out the rhythm, the musician carrying a stringed instrument on which he played the melody. They sang carols at school that were used all over the world, but Dinabandhu thought there was more beauty to the village

songs, some of which his father or the old musician made up for the occasion, both words and music.

The carolers went from village to village and everywhere Christians would come out to join them, receive their greeting, and take some part in the singing. They wound up at the home of the missionary family and with one voice called their Indian greeting: "May the holy birthday be to you a day of blessing and peace."

Then there was the Christmas service in the middle of the morning, when everybody for miles around came. Dinabandhu heard one Hindu woman say to his mother: "I always like to come to the Jesus birthday service. You do tell such nice stories and sing such nice songs. And you certainly know how to have a good time!"

Christmas dinner was the best time of the day for the Sunday school. The boys and girls had saved their money and had brought all the food they could from their homes, in order to give one big feast for the children of depressed-class families who had never had enough to eat. Some of the grown-ups called it the "Christmas Love Feast," and Dinabandhu knew it was designed to show that in the Christian fold there was no caste. How eagerly those children fell upon the food! At the end of the meal there was a present for every child, too, a little cornucopia made of newspaper decorated gaily with colored crayon and filled with *darl*, or parched grain.

Very few of these children knew anything about Christmas, so one of the classes in Sunday school had prepared a special program, with songs, the story of Christmas, and a playlet to make the story clear. It was all given with a good deal of gusto, and of course it included the explanation of their simple

meal by the pastor. "Because we are Jesus' people we like to share what we have with others."

### *The Christian Church in India*

The Christian church in India has been through many experiences in its centuries of existence. It has suffered persecution and plague, and growing pains, and has been betrayed by its friends. It has been in and out of favor with the government, and with the people; but it has more than survived. Although for the first century progress was slow, more recently Christianity has gone forward by leaps and bounds. Today Indian Christians are able to say with confidence that Christ is at home in India, and a new church is in the making, rooted right in the soil of India herself.

This does not mean that its difficulties are all past. There are the problems of caste, paternalism, illiteracy, poverty, rural isolation, and always the problem of Western forms and denominationalism. But today there is a strong body of Christians who are ready to take their share in the solving of the problems.

Today Christians in India proper number about six million—about one in every sixty of the total population. They are the fourth largest community in India, exceeded only by the Hindus, Moslems, and members of primitive tribes classed as animists. They are to be found in nearly every profession and in responsible positions of trust. Says Stephen Neill:

In almost every corner of the country the Christian church has gained a footing, and has touched every stratum of society. The Brahman convert, now a respected minister of the church, comes to England to important conferences, and delights English con-

gregations by his perfect mastery of the English tongue. Outcaste Christians meet to praise God under the shade of ancient trees. . . . There is now a great solid middle class of Christians all over India, teachers, government servants, clerks, lawyers, doctors. There are few towns in which there is not at least one Christian family. The church is increasing rapidly.<sup>1</sup>

In *Out of Bondage*, by the same author, there is a picture of one village which sounds almost unbelievable to the Westerner, who has thought of Christianity as foreign to India.

Almost the whole population has been Christian for generations. . . . When the missionaries withdrew, their work was carried on by a succession of exceptionally able and devoted Indian clergymen. Every child in the village goes to school. There is hardly a soul who cannot read and write. Even the women bring their Bibles to church, and, by the rapidity with which they turn to the preacher's references, give evidence that this is not a mere form. It is no uncommon thing to find twenty or thirty adults at the daily evening service, and at the service held at 4 A.M. on the great festivals there will hardly be one Christian absent. This is not by any means to say that they are all perfect, but in the course of three generations they have to some extent developed that last fruit of Christian grace—a Christian conscience and a Christian public opinion.<sup>2</sup>

One of the surprising things about the Christian group is its literacy and its high percentage of well educated people. In the area of the Madura Church Council in South India, for example, there are five hundred trained Christian teachers working in schools outside those managed by the missions. In that

<sup>1</sup> *Builders of the Indian Church*, by Stephen Neill, pp. 11-12. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1934.

<sup>2</sup> *Out of Bondage*, by Stephen Neill, pp. 94-95. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1930.

district they have also Christian doctors, druggists, and many officials in government. The reason for this is not far to seek. From the beginning the ideal of the missionary for the Indian people was that every Christian who joined the church should be able to read his Bible for himself. With this in view, Christian schools were established, and for many years were the only ones to which the rank and file of Indian boys and girls had access.

### *How the Church Began*

No chapter on Indian Christianity could be written today without paying tribute to the devotion and inspiration of the early missionaries and that long procession which, down through the years, has given itself so splendidly and in such complete selflessness to India. Their contributions and the tributes to their service are too numerous even to mention.

We have noted how the lives of the missionaries, their devotion and their vision, had their direct and indirect influence on Hinduism and Islam, in reform and new vision. But the most significant impact of the missionary was upon the lives of individual Indians, who expressed their new-found power in leadership of their people. It transformed and released new men. Various missionaries, of course, worked in various areas of life. Alexander Duff and a distinguished group of early English and Scottish missionaries, for example, touched chiefly the Brahmans and high-caste families of Bengal. From Duff and his successors has come a distinguished line of brilliant "Bengali Christians," as they are often called, men like K. M. Banerjea, the lawyer, politician, and Indian national leader; Lal Behari Day and Nehemiah Goreh, outstanding ministers of the Indian church; Professor Ramachandra, the mathe-

matician; in more recent days, Principal S. K. Rudra, one of the first Christian college presidents; and H. K. Mukerji, Ph.D., inspector of colleges for Bengal—the first Christian to win a Ph.D. from Calcutta University.

Missionary work still goes on with just such groups as this—in teaching, in medical work, in simple living and friendship. But although this service has in many ways influenced the individual caste Indian, the number won to Christianity from those groups is small in comparison with the great numbers of Christians coming from the low-caste or outcaste people. The earlier missionaries were struck with the terrible degradation of these poverty-stricken, depressed people. As Christians “they could do no other” than minister to that appalling need. To the outcaste they opened a door into a new life.

In *The Untouchables' Quest*, by Godfrey Phillips, we read the words written by a distinguished Brahman in 1901. “But for these missionaries, these humble orders of Hindu society would have forever remained unraised. . . . To the Christian missionaries belongs the credit. . . . The heroism of raising the low from the slough of degradation and debasement was an element of civilization unknown to ancient India.”<sup>1</sup>

A slight indication of what has actually happened to the outcaste may be seen in the following figures, though no figures regarding the great outcaste population could be considered accurate. Of the five and a half million Christians who have had outcaste origins, twenty-eight in every hundred can read and write. For every thousand of the Christian community there are one hundred and twenty pupils in school. For

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The Untouchables' Quest*, by Godfrey Phillips, p. 67. New York, Friendship Press, 1936.

every thousand of the whole population of India there are only thirty-five in school.<sup>1</sup>

Yet the very enthusiasm of the outcaste's response to Christianity is proving embarrassing. Whole villages, whole communities, even districts, have applied for admission to Christianity. When we read the story of Dr. Ambedkar and the most recent mass developments among the outcastes, we can see how serious the difficulty is when thousands at one time wish to "move into" Christianity. For the Christian faith is a matter of "yeast" and "salt," and it is difficult to develop a contagious and strong church unless there is personnel enough to teach that faith and its principles for life.

"During the ten years preceding the last census, converts . . . were flooding into the Christian church at the rate of seven thousand a month."<sup>2</sup> This quotation and the fact that the increase has now risen to about fifteen thousand a month indicate something of the response in one part of the world, which may perhaps offset the more gloomy pictures which usually prevail for American churches. Much of this increase comes in what are known as "mass movements," a movement of caste, tribal, or community groups in India to Christ and into the church. Many but not all of these groups have been of outcaste people.

What happens when the outcaste comes into the Indian church? If he comes as part of a mass movement, he may find to his surprise a hesitant pastor or missionary. Is the church not glad to receive them? "It will be," says the pastor, "after you have learned more of what the Christian religion teaches,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Untouchables' Quest*, by Godfrey Phillips, pp. 70-71.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

and after your knowledge and experience and changed life have been tested. Besides that you will have to promise six very important things: to give up idols; to learn everything you can about Jesus Christ; to come to church and learn to worship God; to study under a teacher or evangelist in order to learn the meaning of Christianity; to send your children to school; and to give up certain definite bad habits." If the group makes this promise to start at least "in the Jesus road," six months or a year are spent in intensive preparation, by the requirement of the church. Sometimes converts are subjected to persecution by their relatives or landlords in that period.

It is a wonderful day when a few hitherto illiterate outcastes are able for the first time to spell out the story in the Gospels, the first book they have ever read, the first words they have ever understood. At last the pastor feels that they are ready. He takes them a family at a time, or individually. It is a very impressive thing when a whole village is baptized at once. Sometimes it is done in a little mud and thatch church, sometimes in a river, sometimes in the village tank. To the outcaste it is a symbol of a life left behind and a new life begun.

Among the early Indian Christians the very separateness and loneliness of the individual was often pathetic, and too often he became Western in self-defense in order not to be so lonely. By the mass movement, though not all missionaries are convinced of the wisdom of the system, this difficulty at least is overcome, and there is a certain glow and enthusiasm and strengthening in the fellowship of the village or family that comes into the church as a unit.

Very careful surveys have been made into the motives, the

conditions of living, and the accomplishments as well as the weaknesses of the Christian groups from the outcaste background. We of the Christian West may have difficulty understanding the terrible poverty and depression in which these, our fellow-Christians of India, live. Says Bishop Pickett of the results of a survey conducted among outcastes:

Almost forty per cent of the families studied live in one-room houses. In more than five hundred of these rooms there lives at least one adult besides the father and mother. In more than two hundred houses at least one cow, buffalo, ox, goat, or pony shares the room. . . . Seventy per cent of all the houses examined have no windows; sixteen per cent have only one window. Only twelve per cent of rooms commonly used for sleeping purposes have a window.<sup>1</sup>

Yet from these groups come reports of generous giving, devoted service, and a passion that leads them out to tell their neighbors about Christ, to visit near-by villages and to win others to the Master "who made me able to stand up like a man when I was but crawling upon the ground."

Unfortunately the missionary, conscious of the contrast of life in America where even the poor are rich as compared with India, often gave the impression that he had inexhaustible riches behind him. The church buildings erected in outcaste villages seemed magnificent to the people. The missionary apparently could work magic and nothing was impossible to ask for. The result was a feeling of dependence which it will take years for India to lose, though today the Indian church is working consciously, even eagerly, toward self-support.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Mass Movements in India*, by J. Waskom Pickett, pp. 106, 107. New York, Abingdon Press, 1933.

Said one Indian pastor to a visiting American: "The whole attitude of our people is summed up in this terrible expression, '*Ma-bap*'—'You are my mother and my father.' Our people have thought of themselves as orphans and the mission as an orphan asylum to which they could turn for entire support. We've got to give up the '*Ma-bap*' theory." Yet what amazing changes have come about among "even the least of these"!

### *The Church at Work and Worship*

The average Christian church in India is much the same as a similar group in America. How does it work? Well, in such activities as this, described by an Indian pastor: "There is a Sunday school for Christian children, taught by members of the church; and one for non-Christian children, conducted for the most part by volunteers; and there are classes for Sunday school teachers. Bands of volunteer teachers conduct open-air meetings on Sunday afternoon and sometimes on week days. There are prayer meetings and sewing societies. The church everywhere is moving in the direction of self-support and self-government. The number of those who are able and willing to tell of the great things Jesus has done for them is proportionately large."

But there are some elements in the life of India's Christians which would seem to us picturesque and different. Here is an Indian pastor who serves in what is known as a "larger parish." His parish covers something like one hundred and forty villages spread out over an area of about fifty miles' radius from his central station. He is the only completely trained and ordained pastor, but he has the enthusiastic help of the whole Christian congregation, for, as they will tell us, "with

us every Christian is a preacher." So there is the preaching band of young men, reaching several villages a Sunday; the Sunday school band of young people; the *bhajan* band, teaching a new song every week to each of several villages visited; the woman's band, the dramatic band, with a new story-sermon-play each week, done perhaps ten times a Sunday to the glory of God.

When occasionally the whole congregation gathers from all the one hundred and forty villages, no building is needed—only the open sky with a cabinet and platform where the church property is kept. Led by the *bhajan* band they sing the "Golden Song" containing perhaps the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Twenty-third Psalm, and all the parables of Jesus. Why? Because scarcely ten in the whole great congregation can read or write a single word. "So we sing our faith. We sing it in the market places. We sing it in our homes. We sing it in the fields, at our work and at our play. It goes from heart to heart and life to life."

Then in many parts of India there is the "God's Handful" service. As the congregation enters the church, each family comes up to the front where several earthenware jars or bowls are placed. Out from the end of a turban or a sash, or the corner of a *sari*, or from a bundle carried in the hands, the members pour grain, rice, wheat, whatever may be the current staple of the district; perhaps there is a basket for bangles and earrings and anklets, or even a few coins; perhaps there is a pile of vegetables or sugar cane, or a bowl of eggs or lemons. "What does it mean?" we ask in wonder. "God's handful," says the pastor. "Do you not have God's handful in your country? In each home it is the custom, when the food is prepared,

to save out one handful, the biggest we can hold. That is God's handful, and we bring it in thanks to the church to help someone not so fortunate as we."

The test of any strong Christian group is of course in its service to others. Says one Indian leader:

We are not truly Christian unless we serve. Christ is not truly and fully present in the individual or in the church in India unless they are rendering steadily sacrificial service without money and without price.

A pastor in the Central Provinces writes:

We have an organization connected with our church. The women get together every other Saturday for sewing. At Christmas they distribute clothes to the poor of the congregation, and they also hold an annual bazaar where they sell the remaining clothes, sweets, toys, and so forth. The proceeds they give to the following bodies: first, our church; second, the poor fund; third, the Bible society; fourth, the Indian National Missionary Society; fifth, the Indian mission board; and they keep a little for their work. Last year they realized about one hundred and fifty dollars. In addition to this they do regular house visiting.

How strangely familiar the words sound! How like the program, and even the causes, of the women's organization in an American church!

In addition to the service rendered by the individual congregation or Christian, the Indian church has organized its own missionary work, under the Indian National Missionary Society, the only absolutely "indigenous" Christian organization in India, run by Indians, planned by Indians, and financed by Indians. It has an annual expenditure of about \$20,000. It was organized in 1905 at Serampore, with the aim of working in

the villages and unoccupied fields where the foreign missionaries have never gone, and of developing the responsibility of the Indian church for India.

The Indian National Missionary Society has been responsible for one quite unique experiment.<sup>1</sup> In 1916, in connection with a government project of canal irrigation, a large area of hitherto uncultivated land was reclaimed and one tract was offered to the National Missionary Society for a Christian village settlement.

Earnest, hard-working village Christians from many different centers became the pioneer colonists, calling their village Bethlehem. They built a mud-brick church by their own money and labor. There are now eight hundred Christians, paying for their farms in yearly installments. Many of them had been in the clutches of Hindu money-lenders and nearly all carried almost impossible economic burdens.

The National Missionary Society's contribution went for schools. Terms and hours have been arranged with farm work and seasons in mind. In the slack summer months they even keep open in the cool of the evening.

One of the first school projects was that of street cleaning and sanitation. This was sweepers' work, yet their village could not afford sweepers, and under the active example of teachers and pupils even the parents joined in the clean-up process.

The vaccinator lost his terrors during the smallpox epidemic after the schools had devoted a day's program to the why and how of vaccination; and the entire student body marched out

<sup>1</sup> See "Bethlehem, A Christian Village in the Panjab," by Komolini Sircar, in *The International Review of Missions*, April, 1936.

in full strength to the village well to "take it" publicly, beginning with the teachers and going down to the youngest pupil.

There are many stories told of this little village: of its co-operative efforts to take care of the Indian missionaries and teachers; of the organization of village music and singing, of the village park and dispensary; of the evangelistic groups which they send out to other villages; of the athletic life, with inter-village tournaments and Indian games; of the "prayer corners" set apart for family worship in almost every home; of the increase in literacy, which has grown to the point where today in every house at least one member can read; of the organization of "Servants of the Village"—seven women set apart by the church to look after the sick, the widowed, and the orphans.

Today Bethlehem is a community with a vision, and the church is at the heart of it. There is worship every day, not just on Sunday. The bell is rung at dawn and again at dark.

It comes natural to farmers to worship God at sunrise and sunset, beginning and ending their day's work at the feet of God. . . . The number of those who join differs, . . . but always there is a real spirit of prayer and praise.<sup>1</sup>

There have been times of terrible trial and difficulty, but they feel that their little church is all the stronger for the times of heart-searching, discipline, and trials. In January, 1935, they asked the National Missionary Society to let them become self-supporting, and gave up their monthly grant.

<sup>1</sup> "Bethlehem, a Christian Village in the Panjab," by Komolini Sircar, in *The International Review of Missions*, April, 1936, p. 203.

Everyone is now eager to render voluntary service, whereas before this, when we had a regular monthly grant, we used to receive endless petitions for money. . . . These are just the beginnings that have cheered and encouraged us to go forward with hope and courage, putting our entire faith in Him who is graciously leading us on step by step.<sup>1</sup>

### *What Do the Young Christians Do?*

If we asked Dinabandhu to describe young people's work in India, he would hardly know where to begin, for there is nothing which exactly corresponds to the Christian Youth Movement of North America, although they do have the Christian Endeavor program, Epworth League and other such organizations. Yet when we try to collect all that Indian Christian young people are doing, there is far too much to describe in any one short chapter. For the most part it is divided into three different types:

First, there is the organization, more or less local, of groups in schools. This is not on a national scale at all, but there is no Christian school in India without some kind of organization through which the boys or girls can express their Christian purpose in service, and cultivate their Christian lives. These organizations have many names and do fine work in deputation preaching, teaching, in service for the poor and depressed. But they are not part of a national movement.

The second type of Christian organization is that of the college students. Here we have a truly national movement, which sends representatives to the international Christian meetings in Europe, America, and the Far East; which entertains dele-

<sup>1</sup> "Bethlehem, a Christian Village in the Panjab," by Komolini Sircar, in *The International Review of Missions*, April, 1936, p. 205.

gates from England and America; and which, through its secretaries, carries on a strong program of Christian work, with summer conferences and national assemblies—all on a college level. The reports of the meetings of this group are extremely interesting. They are an educated, progressive minority, quite conscious of their power and increasingly ready to put their whole lives into sacrificial service as individuals and as a group.

One of their projects of interest has been the inviting to India of a group of Negro Christian leaders from America to discuss with them the meaning of the Christian faith for a depressed or oppressed group, and to give them help and inspiration in their Indian service.

Under the Student Christian Movement, too, various camps have been held. One student writes:

In my first year at college we had a mixed student camp at a beautiful hill station in the Western Ghats. Nearly all the colleges of western India were represented. . . . The language prejudices were all forgotten. Everybody joined in common worship. The perfect spirit of fellowship and harmony that reigned during the camp days could encourage any pessimist to believe in the future generations of India. This could only have been possible because of the uniting power of the spirit of Christ, and the feeling of a common Lord. The program, too, was inspiring. . . . I came home much revived in body and spirit, and I am sure nearly everyone felt in his or her innermost heart the distinct call to service for the glory of our Lord. Since then I feel cheated out of something which strengthens my moral well-being if I miss any of our annual camps.

The third type of work is that attempted here and there by the young people of the Indian churches; so far this is the least extensive of the Christian work of India. "It is a much-

neglected field," wrote Christian leaders when asked for their opinion on this subject. Many go away to school and never return to their villages. Those left behind have little chance for training. Yet here and there real experiments have been tried. One such group has sent a report of its activity which sounds much like that of similar groups in Western churches.

Our little club, the Young People's Fellowship, was started in the middle of the year 1933. It has the strong support of the few college students and there are others, such as schoolboys and learned professors and teachers, and a few young business men. . . . Some of the keen observers had seen that after the church service the members simply looked at each other without knowing each other, and went away home. It was to remedy this strangeness that we originated the Young People's Fellowship.

In the club there is provision for badminton, deck tennis, and volleyball; apart from the physical development and recreation, attention is given to the intellectual development of the members. This is done by arranging lectures, and also a small library supplied to the members of the Fellowship, containing many useful books—novels, historical, classical, social, and economic. Young men and women are members of the Fellowship. They mix freely, and in this is a great boon to India, for it is not seen among people of other faiths.

To encourage just such groups as this, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. and the various Christian literature societies of India have prepared courses of study, discussion units, and lists of topics.

The Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements are active in India and have been recruited largely from Christian groups. While they have many Christian leaders, they are today increasingly representative of all faiths. Barriers of caste, race,

and social status are broken down within the Scout and Guide movements, and their retreats for leaders are helping provide a new unity among the Indian people.

Some mention should be made of the new student organization bridging the gap between the various religious groups, and known as the Inter-Religious Student Fellowship. This is an attempt to unite Christian, Hindu, Moslem and other students in common thought about the importance of religious life. From Trivandrum where there are two thousand college students, the secretary of the Student Fellowship writes:

How many of them get opportunities to attend any study group on religion? We organized three Bible study groups, a Bhagavad-Gita class, and this year a Koran class. Thus our students have the opportunity to study any religion they want. In addition, we felt the need of a discussion class where students could meet to consider different problems freely. A science college professor agreed to lead such a group, and we have started it. All these are weekly classes. Members are getting more and more interested.

A Christian missionary describes his experience in the Fellowship:

I was faced with such questions as this: Is not socialism the solution of our problems, or communism? Why do we need religion? Is not religion an opiate? How do you know there is a God? Isn't ethics enough? Why do men need God? What can we do about the present dead forms of religion? These questions arose again and again, no matter what the subject, and I felt they were uppermost in the minds of students. There are thousands among our Christian people who think, as we do, that cooperation in such work is not compromising our loyalty to Christ, and I am glad that a growing number not only feel this cooperative work is necessary, but experience a new loyalty to their own ideals in it.

*The Church Becomes Indian*

In the past hundred years of missionary work some wonderful Indian leaders have been trained. Yet it was very hard for the missionaries of the West to let go of the responsibility and leadership in the Indian church, and equally hard for the Indian church to take them on. So, though for most of that time the aim of missions has been expressed in the often-quoted words, "a self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating church," the real process of Indianizing the church and all branches of Christian work in India has been relatively recent.

Yet there are notable signs of progress today. An official report, sent recently by a denomination working in India, includes these significant sentences:

We attended the annual meeting of the Assembly, over a hundred strong, the majority being Indian Christians. For six years now this representative body has been performing the functions formerly belonging to the mission, which included missionaries only. The president today is an Indian and there was every evidence of an intelligent and enthusiastic interest in directing the varied work which has been built up. The annual budget of \$100,000 sent from America is supplemented now by \$75,000 raised in India, though only four or five of the congregations are entirely self-supporting. As one looked over that assembly of serious, devoted, Christian workers, one's mind went back to the scenes in the villages; and here was the finished product, developed through three generations from those backward communities, untutored and unlearned, living day by day at starvation point, oppressed and ground down beneath the heel of the Hindu landlord. What hath God wrought!

The signs of the Indianizing of the Christian church are seen especially in the emergence of new forms of worship, new

types of architecture, new ways of expressing the Christian message, and, most of all, in the growing ability of Indians as they actually take over control of church affairs.

India is developing a beautiful style of church architecture for centers of a little more means than the average village. The chapel in Chittoor is a good example. There are no walls to this church, in its lovely mango grove, but graceful vines climb a lattice and lend the "beauty of flowers and the tracery of leaf shadow." The leader of the service usually sits cross-legged, after the manner of the Indian religious teacher, on a slightly raised platform at the front. A little Indian lamp illuminates a cross of teakwood, and in recesses on either side are other Indian lamps in old Indian patterns, while the pillars are carved in Dravidian style.<sup>1</sup>

### *Ashrams and "Refreshers"*

We have noted the individual leader who has emerged in every generation in education, public life, and the ministry. But the real fruit comes when the very organization and management becomes Indian and begins to think and work in new and creative forms. Here the great example is Bishop V. S. Azariah of Dornakal, the first Indian bishop of the Anglican church. East and West alike, we Christians listen to his words and learn from his experience.

In Hinduism a religious leader—mystic, prophet, or *guru*—often developed for his disciples what is known as an *ashram*. The disciples wanted to stay together and be always with the master. So an *ashram* became a mixture of monastery, private

<sup>1</sup> Pictures of this chapel are found in *Heritage of Beauty*, by Daniel J. Fleming, pp. 56 and 57. New York, Friendship Press, 1937.

home, organization headquarters, school, or even an old-world communal village. Mr. Gandhi, for example, formed such an *ashram* at Ahmedabad, where, in most intimate fellowship, his followers could share in activities, meditation, and of course work for a common purpose.

Now the ideal of such an *ashram* seems to be well fitted for Christian purposes. It becomes a place of Christian fellowship and a center of community service for the country field. There have been a number of experiments in Christian *ashrams*. One of the most significant, perhaps, is that at Tirupatur in South India, called the Christu-kula Ashram, under the leadership of Dr. Jesudason, to which people come from all over India for the courses or for the atmosphere of Christian fellowship.

Another Indian adaptation is the gradual development of short-term courses for pastors and teachers. An adequate supply of full-time Christian pastors or workers to be supported by the church will long be impossible. Lay leaders must be developed. Theological seminaries are offering three-week courses for laymen already able to read and write and willing to be shepherds for their village Christian flocks. They must be vouched for by the district pastor as of unquestioned Christian character, and appointed by their church. At the end of the course they are given a special consecration service, and they take, without pay, a recognized position in the congregation of Christians.

In several parts of India similar courses are being planned for women leaders, while most of the Christian normal training schools have summer sessions or "refresher" courses for "old students." Christian schools and seminaries are providing

training for the wife of the pastor, who is often an illiterate village girl, totally unequal to her job. In one center, one of the women teachers is running a summer school especially for teachers' wives. Each woman is given a little house to which she can bring her children and her cooking pots and be a part of an interesting community of people just like herself. She soon finds friends and she gets ideas she has never dreamed of before for the enrichment of her work and that of her husband.<sup>1</sup>

### *Losing the Western Strings*

India has gone further than we in America in developing interdenominational cooperation and church unity. There are today united churches for North India, for western India, and for South India. The divisions are those of language and geography. These groupings are made up of several denominations, each of which had to sacrifice something of its own in order that they might all come together. Writing of this, one of the leaders said: "The result is a church strong in numbers and great in spirit." In at least one case church identity has been entirely renounced, in others, schools to which much loyalty had been given by separate denominational groups have been merged in union institutions. Not all the denominations are in these great union bodies, but there is increasing interest in them, and in addition there is today the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, where all the Protestant Christians can find inspiration and strength, and can take their share in the world-wide Christian church.

Though in many parts of India the Christian church is still

<sup>1</sup> See *Out of Bondage*, by Stephen Neill, pp. 107-8. London, Edinburgh House Press.

of the West and foreign in its buildings, pews, songs, form of organization, and leadership, the process of making it Indian is going on, and distinctive experiments point the direction for the future. Perhaps there will be more *sadhus*, and fewer bishops. *Ashrams* and chapels may become more common than church buildings and may seem more truly worshipful to India. *Bhajans* may take the place of hymns. *Kirtans*, or singing processions, may depose the Western type of prayer meeting; and the life of Jesus and the heroes of the Christian church may be sung and acted in Indian epic to succeeding generations of Christians accustomed to seeing the dramas of ancient Indian heroes. Who knows? India will find out—Christian India.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### *Dinabandhu Needs a Friend*

DINABANDHU'S CHRISTIAN YOUTH LEAGUE WAS HOST ONE week-end to a conference of Christian young people, concerned about their country's future and their part in building a new India. Dinabandhu was on the committee in charge of the meeting, and worked very hard over the program. The discussion proved full of interest. There were moments when everybody wanted to talk at the same time. There were other moments when everybody wanted to sit silent and think. A high point came when they felt drawn to the chapel of the school for a period of meditation, so burdened were they by their country's need.

Dinabandhu's part in the discussion was to state all the facts that he and his committee had been able to gather regarding the needs of India from the viewpoint of young patriots and young Christians. They realized especially the need of fellowship. Alone they could do little for the building of a Christian world; but linked by ties of friendship and common purpose, who knew what they could accomplish? They realized too what assets they had in their friends. In the resolutions which they passed they called for still more friends upon whose help, support, and interest they could count; to whose backing they could look in moments of crisis. If we

should meet with them, we also might see India's needs in about the same terms.

### *Friends in National Leadership*

Young India, like young America, long to make their influence felt in politics and government affairs. How much better they could manage things than the older generation seems to be managing them! How swiftly they would respond to the cry of some of the most far-sighted of India's leaders! They feel keenly the need of Christians in positions of influence, and are often impatient with the slow response of their own church groups. Many of them are warm followers and devoted admirers of Gandhi and Nehru, and look with affectionate sympathy upon Dr. Ambedkar, the leader of the untouchables, as well as some of the more dramatic of the Congress leaders.

Christians of India point with pride to such men as K. T. Paul, who just prior to his death was one of the representatives of India at the Round Table Conference in London where the constitution was being framed. Dinabandhu and his friends need men like this brilliant layman, whose death was so great a loss to the Christian movement of India.

K. T. Paul was a graduate of Madras Christian College, and a member of the great land-owning class of South India. His family had been Christians for several generations. After a brief period as headmaster of a Christian school, he studied law, served several years in government, returned to his own college as a teacher of history, and left it to become the first secretary of the National Missionary Society, in which position for nine years he traveled about India, getting the society on a firmly established basis of service and self-support. For

ten years he served as national secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association of India, taking a special interest in the development of rural cooperative societies and rural reconstruction work, which became his great hobby. Since he himself was a land-owner, he was able to demonstrate his theories on his own holdings, as few other Christian rural workers could. Throughout his life he saw the vision of the united Indian church. Denominationalism seemed to him foolish, and he constantly reminded his fellow-Christians of the prayer of the Master "that they might all be one."

When, in the cold of an English winter, he contracted the serious illness that took his life, all India united in tributes of grief and honor. The Hindu editor of the *Indian Social Reformer* wrote:

He was peculiarly fitted, both by his intimate knowledge of Indian problems and by his international contacts, to be one of the Indian representatives. He was a strong and enlightened Indian Nationalist, a devout Christian teacher attached to the culture and traditions of his ancestral faith. He worked in terms of close cooperation with his countrymen of all creeds and classes.

There are other Christian leaders giving notable service in the fields of business, science, industry, and community life—social workers of distinction like Patel and Datta; editors and publicists like Chenchiah and Cornelius; scientists like Bannerji and Cumaraswami; and in the training of just such men and women lies the great hope of the Indian church.

#### *Friends as Teachers*

Young India sees clearly the need of education to help their country take her part in the life of the world. With what

pride they view the work of Rabindranath Tagore, India's great modern poet, in the magnificent International University at Bolpur. In contrast with Gandhi's slogan of "India for the Indians," Tagore tries to help his students find the best in every culture, adapt it to India, and use it for a new day.

Young India may well be proud, too, of such Christian schools as that at Moga in the Punjab, where they can see the influence of a Christ-like personality on all phases of rural life. Each one of them can look back, too, upon some teacher whose inspiration has made him what he is. Not all are famous. There are humbler lives just as significant. Such a tribute as is paid by an American associate to an Indian woman on the faculty of one school may be paid to hundreds of others:

She is the most beloved member of the school. To the school cooks, the water-carriers, the washerman, the firewood-sellers, and the peddlers of all sorts who visit the school, she is "The Big Teacher"—their patron, their judge, their adviser and friend, their mediator in approaching those incomprehensible white folks who rule the school! If anything goes wrong in the school, from a scorpion's sting to an attempted suicide, it is she who is first on the spot and first to understand and first to help. . . . If our schools in India succeed to any degree in their aim of building Christian character, it will be due in large measure to the devotion and character and unstinted labor of such Indian colleagues.

### *The Pastor Friend*

When they come to a consideration of how to make the influence of Christ felt in their country's life, educated Christian youth have always been astonished and appalled at the ignorance of even church members in their land regarding

the very religion they try to follow. With so few of the Christian group able to read their Bibles, most of them know little beyond the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the facts of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Then there are too many nominal Christians even in educated circles. There are such baffling unsolved problems as caste—even within the church—and poverty, and dependence of spirit as well as body. How can they do anything about these needs? They must have more pastors whose personalities are really alive and kindled, who are not simply theological seminary graduates, but men of real vision, ready to try the thrilling new experiments so much needed for India's life.

When they come to add up their assets in this work the young Christians find certain significant personalities who illustrate just what they mean. There is India's first bishop, Azariah of Dornakal, able to mobilize the church forces for the redeeming of a whole province; and there are others whose ability as writers or editors has been put into the work of making Christ real through literature, or through oratory, or poetry, or song. Standing like a tower in the midst of this group, they find such a man as Narayan Vaman Tilak, the poet saint of modern India.

Tilak was born in the Bombay Presidency, a Brahman of the Brahmans, his father being in government service, his mother a very religious Hindu poetess. While he was still in school Narayan was left virtually the head of a family, with four younger children to be supported on about seventy cents a week.

Yet he continued his education, taking Sanskrit under one

of the most famous scholars of the day, winning prizes in elocution and oratory, and studying English with a dictionary as his only textbook.

As a young man he held a great variety of temporary posts, and finally became the editor of a series of volumes on the literature of India, with a reputation as pundit or teacher because of his articles in the press of the day.

A few years later the rajah of a small state engaged him as secretary. While traveling to his new position he fell into conversation with an Englishman in the railway compartment. After a long discussion the stranger said to him: "Young man, God is leading you. Study the life of Jesus and you will certainly become a Christian." Said Tilak, at a later date: "I laughed at what I regarded as the man's audacity, but he gave me a copy of the New Testament, and I promised I would read it."<sup>1</sup>

He read the New Testament through in the greatest detail, marking the points of interest with pencil. "When I reached the Sermon on the Mount I could not tear myself away from the burning words of love and tenderness and truth. In those three little chapters I found answers to the most abstruse questions of Hindu philosophy."<sup>2</sup>

He came to the conclusion that Christ was the teacher whom India and the whole world needed. Five points about Jesus especially impressed him: he was the ideal man; he made love of God and of man of equal value; he was completely one with the Father; he had faith in his message; and he endured the cross. As he says in his own Hindu way,

<sup>1</sup> From *Indian Christians*. Madras, G. A. Natesan & Co.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

he found in Jesus the goal of his long search—the living *guru* (teacher) who could most richly satisfy his soul's hunger.

He wrote to a missionary, asking him to publish the fact that he was a Christian. Once this was announced in the press, he was baptized in Bombay publicly and from then on for many months endured severe persecution, even from his own family. The letters which he wrote to his wife at that time were full of love and devotion as well as understanding, and when she finally decided to become a Christian, and with their son was baptized, he writes that their life became one of "rare beauty and happiness."

For twenty-one years Tilak served as pastor and writer, and on the faculty of a Christian theological seminary, where he taught a great variety of subjects. He became a very eloquent preacher and leader, writing devotional booklets and courses for pastors. He and his wife built a house in a country village, which they called the "Christ Home," where they received the forlorn and fallen; and they provided a worker who could touch the lives of the poor and needy all about.

Tilak's great gift to India was in the field of literature, for he was a poet of real ability. He wrote for children, edited a monthly paper for Christians, translated such great works as *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, and prepared a great church hymnal for his part of India.

Tilak died in 1919 and by his own desires a triumphant festival was held, in place of a funeral, the evening after his death. The strains of his own finest songs sounded the theme of his life. One of the loveliest of his poems may serve as a sample of his gift to India and to the world:

As lyre and the musician,  
As thought and spoken word,  
As rose and fragrant odors,  
As flute and breath accord;  
So deep the bond that binds me  
To Christ my Lord.

As mother and her baby,  
As traveler lost and guide,  
As oil and flickering lamp-flame,  
Are each to each allied;  
Life of my life, Christ bindeth  
Me to his side.

As lake and streaming rainfall,  
As fish and water clear,  
As sun and gladdening dayspring  
In union close appear;  
So Christ and I are holden  
In bonds how dear! <sup>1</sup>

Young India needs men like Tilak to blaze trails for Christ through the dark wood of India's present problems: young men who will throw in their lives with the church but will not be bound by convention, whose minds will be open to see new ways of expression. They will become the leaders of the Christian youth movement in India. They will be the successors of Mr. P. O. Philip, the secretary of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon; and of Abraham and Chelliah and Thakerdass—present-day organizers of interdenominational Christianity. In these men young India now finds friends, but many more are needed.

<sup>1</sup> Translated by Nicol Macnicol.

*The Missionary Friend*

In expressing their need for friends the young people of India always refer to the kind of missionary needed for the future. What kind?

He should be not an administrator, and not primarily an organizer, not even a teacher in the technical sense. But he is primarily a teacher in the larger sense of furnishing leadership, advice, counsel, encouragement, stimulus. He is a liaison officer between the world of experience and need of the West, and the world of experience and need in India. . . . Essentially I think the Western missionary is a "coach," to use a term familiar in America. His best service is as "trainer" of the younger Indians.<sup>1</sup>

And again:

All thoughtful Indian Christians are agreed that the resources of the Indian church are not yet adequate for the training of the leaders that she needs. . . . Here, as in everything else, the best work is done where European and Indian work in close fellowship. . . . For many years yet the scholarship and science, the discipline and spiritual experience of Western universities will be needed. Those who are willing to bring them as an offering of love to India will be welcome from the first day as brothers in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Said a young Indian pastor to me when I was in India: "You know, there are three kinds of missionaries. One missionary is your grandfather, and you love your grandfather and you have to have a grandfather. Some missionaries are your father; and you love your father and you have to have a

<sup>1</sup> From *The Christian Mission in Rural India*, by Kenyon L. Butterfield, pp. 85, 99. New York, International Missionary Council, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> *Builders of the Indian Church*, by Stephen Neill, pp. 16, 150-51. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1934.

father. And some are brothers. Today India needs many more brothers. It is too bad that so often your father and your grandfather resent it that you love your brother so much and need him more. But, you see, your father and your grandfather never think you have grown up, and your brother knows you have. He walks beside you and helps you when you need it most. Today India needs many more brothers."

And are such missionaries available? Yes, each year a few young men and women go out in just that spirit from the West to the East. Here is a girl, director of the 4-H Clubs of one part of Massachusetts, who goes to give her service in a school for girls from country villages learning to be Christian home-makers, but needing extension service and follow-up, and possibly an Indian organization similar to the 4-H Clubs, which will bind them in a fellowship to strengthen and sustain them under adverse conditions.

Here is a young man trained as a pastor, his wife a doctor, who goes to develop, in company with a group of young Christian Indians, an *ashram* in a neglected area of rural India. He must see what that district needs and fit his ministry to it; and some day he will be able to withdraw, leaving a cooperative fellowship to carry on in his place, and perhaps an Indian church built on strong foundations.

Here is a young teacher, whose wife is an expert in dramatics and English. They go to a college campus, where she also can put her gifts at the disposal of Indian youth.

Here is a man with music at his finger-tips, whose wife is a story-teller of no mean skill; and both of them with language gifts and the ability to express themselves in dramatic fashion. They go to cooperate with an Indian rural church council in

the working out of new forms of worship and in developing a new program under the direction of a body of Indian Christians who can tell them what is needed most.

### *Friendship between Indians and Westerners*

Friendship calls for an exchange in two directions, and India's past difficulties have, many of them, risen from the fact that so often the West condescended to her, extended a helping hand, made a gift, but expected nothing in return. It is a proud day for the Indian Christian when he discovers that the West needs him also. Certainly the church of Christ will never be complete until we have Indian churches participating in our fellowship and giving us India's interpretation of the Christian faith.

There are other services besides those given by missionaries which we can render to India. We can increasingly express our confidence in the Indian church by making our financial gifts for its work and maintaining our interest even when the missionary from the West gives way and leaves his work in the hands of an Indian colleague.

It may be possible for young America to give direct help now and then to that growing Indian youth movement which is not yet on its feet. They may send deputations from the Christian youth movement of the West to the East, like the younger members of the delegations to the great worldwide conference of Christians in Madras in 1938, and the World Conference of Christian Youth at Amsterdam in 1939.

How thrilling to be able at last to hold such conferences—international, interdenominational—with young Christians fully participating, where ideas and purposes can be shared,

and where the consecration of one group can be strengthened by the tremendous sacrifice and dedication of another, as together they look forward to "building a new world." The results of those great meetings, coming back to the youth groups of all Christendom, will stimulate us to better and more hopeful and enthusiastic service for a long time to come.

From the most recent official statement of the National Christian Council, under date of January, 1937, comes this paragraph written by the Christians of India to us of the West:

While the primary obligation to meet the present situation rests with the churches in India, the kingdom of God knows no frontier either political or racial. Help continues to be needed from the churches of the West, and the present situation [the demand of the untouchables for Christianity] calls for an increased supply of men and money. This is an object for which financial help from the older churches might legitimately be asked and generously given. The Council recognizes a call for united and earnest prayer. India needs the prayers of the whole church.

Mr. P. O. Philip, the Indian secretary of the National Christian Council, expresses the thought that there is today pioneer missionary work to be done. "In spite of the fact that there are in India . . . more than six thousand foreign missionaries and more than eight times that number of Indian workers, several regions in this vast land still demand pioneer missionary efforts."<sup>1</sup>

There is pioneering needed not only in geographical areas but in such fields as industrialism, housing, the problems cre-

<sup>1</sup> "Cooperation from the West," by P. O. Philip, in *An Indian Approach to India*, edited by Milton Stauffer, p. 168. New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1927.

ated by the poverty and illiteracy of the masses, and the relations of labor and capital. There are such areas as the drink and opium traffic on which so far comparatively little has been done by the church. Such pioneering calls for a truly united effort.

What can youth do about it? One of India's student secretaries not long ago put it this way: "To the youth of the West we would lovingly say: 'Come over and help us. Let us jointly explore the infinite riches which are in Christ Jesus, and let us work together to lead India to the feet of her Lord.' "

For India's greatest need is for Christ, the great friend. Whatever may be said about churches or missionaries, India responds to Christ in love and admiration and devotion and humility. We hear criticisms of Christians everywhere, but never any criticism of him.

Edward Thompson, in his life of Rabindranath Tagore, says:

What Western Christianity is charged to carry to India is Christ; and what the ancient religion of India has to gain from Christianity is Christ—not a teacher only, but the Word made flesh, God entering our lives, our poverty and agonies, living as a working man in Eastern bazaars, dying the shameful death of a criminal slave.<sup>1</sup>

And how is India to be confronted with Christ? For the most part her response has been to Christ made realizable and expressed in any one of three ways.

First, in the Bible. "No one can estimate," writes C. E. Abraham, an Indian Christian pastor, "what the Bible has

<sup>1</sup> *Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work*, by Edward J. Thompson. Calcutta, Association Press, 1921.

done for India and her people. The great Christian personalities throughout the years in India have more often than not seen Christ first and come to his feet as the result of the story of his life."

Second, in the work of a Christian school, church, or hospital, through teaching or preaching of the message. Again and again the high-caste man has seen Christ unexpectedly through the transformation in one little group of outcastes; or has found the marvelous witness of a Christian hospital a transforming factor to change life; or has seen the church going joyfully about the business of worship and self-forgetful service.

And third, through the personality of a Christ-filled man or woman of the West or of the East. To a group like Dinabandhu's friends Christ is more often caught than taught, for when they see his glory in the face of a really radiant man they respond as to nothing else. So for many a young Indian of today Christ has been best expressed in India's great Christian mystic and holy man, Sadhu Sundar Singh. The life of this amazing twentieth-century saint has been well written by his friend, C. F. Andrews,<sup>1</sup> and only a bare sketch can be given here.

Sundar Singh was born in a Sikh village in the state of Patiala, less than fifty years ago, the son of a chief of considerable wealth and a very religious mother. From early childhood Sundar was so interested in religion that while other boys were playing games, he was trying to find out the meaning of the religious texts.

<sup>1</sup> *Sadhu Sundar Singh*, by C. F. Andrews. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1934.

When he was fourteen, his mother died, and a second blow followed close in the death of his elder brother, whom he loved dearly. In his despair, terrible doubts rose in his mind, which he could not overcome. His Hindu teachers were unable to help him, and his father's sorrow was so great that he offered no comfort.

About that time Sundar went to a Christian missionary school in his own village to get more "book education." He found to his surprise that he was required to study the New Testament, and rebelled at the thought. Coming so soon upon the sorrow in his family, this sense of rebellion against the Christians proved an outlet for his bitterness and unhappiness. He became the ringleader of a band of boys who persecuted the missionaries, throwing stones and mud upon them as they preached.

Finally, when he was about fifteen, he took a copy of the New Testament and burned it publicly in a frenzy of violence. Shocked at his own loss of self-control, he sank deeper into despair at life. Writing of this period, he says:

On the third day, when I could bear it no longer, I got up at three in the morning and prayed that if there was a God at all he would reveal himself to me. My intention was that if I got no satisfaction, I would place my head upon the railway line when the five o'clock train passed by, and kill myself. . . . I prayed for half an hour . . . hoping to get peace. At 4:30 A.M. I saw something of which I had no idea previously. In the room where I was praying I saw a great light. I thought the place was on fire. I looked around, but could find nothing. . . . Then as I prayed and looked into the light, I saw the form of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . If it had been some Hindu incarnation I would have prostrated myself before it. But it was the Lord Jesus Christ,

whom I had been insulting a few days before. I felt that a vision like this could not come out of my own imagination. I heard a voice saying in Hindustani: "How long will you persecute me? . . . You were praying to know the right way. Why do you not take it?" So I fell at his feet. . . . This was the joy I was wishing to get. . . . When I sat up the vision had all disappeared, but . . . the peace and joy have remained with me ever since.

I went off and told my father that I had become a Christian. He told me: "Go and lie down and sleep. Why, only the day before yesterday you burned the Bible; and now you say you are a Christian!" I said: ". . . Today I am his disciple, and I am going to serve him."<sup>1</sup>

Sundar Singh never for a moment thereafter questioned the reality of this tremendous experience.

Up to that moment, I hated Jesus. . . . No, it was no dream. When you have just had a cold bath, you don't dream! It was a reality—the living Christ. He can turn an enemy into a preacher of the gospel.<sup>2</sup>

The following year brought much suffering, loneliness, and persecution. He was excommunicated from both his family and the Sikh community. At sixteen, when it became legally permissible for him to take the step, Sundar was baptized publicly at Simla, far from his home, in order to be out of danger of mob violence; and he then went to a Christian boarding school for further education. He was still lonely there. The ordinary foolishness of the boys just went over his head or left him in bewilderment. As one of his professors said: "He was at that time ageless. He was not like the young

<sup>1</sup> *Sadhu Sundar Singh*, by C. F. Andrews, pp. 44-46. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1934.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

people, though he was young, nor like the adults, because he had not been through an adult's experiences."

He dedicated himself as a *sadhu*—"one set aside to the purposes of religion." Yet he was a *Christian* holy man—a new type for India.

It is interesting to read what Samuel Stokes, an American mystic and social worker, wrote about him at that time: "Some weeks after I had changed my mode of life, an Indian Christian was moved to join me. . . . His work has been far better than my own, and though he is scarcely more than a boy he has suffered hunger, cold, sickness, and even imprisonment for his Master."

One of the first efforts which Sundar undertook was a work for crippled boys. He and "Brother Stokes" collected them from all over that part of India—maimed, lame, halt, and blind, and the children of lepers, and formed for them a summer camp in the hills.

From then on, wherever there was poverty or misery, sickness or hunger, leprosy or prison pestilence, he was to be found. He journeyed among the common people, preaching always, talking constantly about Christ. He came more and more to reflect his Master by his life and even his face. Little children often called him Jesus. In the homes where he was entertained on his visit to the United States, again and again some child would say: "Mother, Jesus told me so and so," looking at the *sadhu*.

His rare sense of humor showed itself in the illustrations he used in his talks. "When we see a crane," he once said, "standing motionless on the side of a tank, we may suppose from his attitude that he is musing on the glory of God, or

the excellent quality of the water. But no such thing! The moment he catches sight of a small fish, he springs upon it and gulps it down. Just such is the attitude of many with regard to prayer. Seated by the shore of the boundless ocean of God's love, they are wrapped up in the one thought of acquiring some specially required object."

Like Paul of old, Sadhu Sundar Singh was a constant traveler. Many of his journeys took him through the dangerous passes of the high Himalayas and he had even gone into Tibet. In 1929 he determined to make another journey there, though it had become more difficult and dangerous in the last few years, and his friends tried to dissuade him from it, especially since his health was frail. It seemed to him a venture of faith to go there once more to help the people find his Master. What though he might meet a martyr's grave? It would bring him all the closer to his Lord. So, "bound in the spirit," he started upon his journey and has never been heard of again.

Says C. F. Andrews:

The conclusion seems very nearly certain that he gave up his life in the service of his Master, sometime in the year 1929, probably in the month of May or June. . . . "Through much tribulation" he had entered at last into the Kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

Sadhu Sundar Singh has a message for East and West alike. To the Hindu he shows Christ, the fulfillment of the most religiously hungry people in all the world. To the Christian, to whom Christ has become a new way of life, he shows an example of complete loss of self. He lost his life before he was forty, giving it in a glory of spending in a completely

<sup>1</sup> *Sadhu Sundar Singh*, by C. F. Andrews, p. 182.

Eastern setting which the East can understand better than the West. In him India gave the world a portrait of Christ in present-day life. And young India, tempted sometimes to think of Christian leaders as Western, can turn to the Sadhu's life with a glow of pride and a sense of their own potential power. In him they see Christ, their country's greatest friend. Here is a genuine Christian, at the same time completely Indian. So could they be, and they could blaze still different trails in Christian service.

With them in mind let us look back to Dinabandhu's weekend conference, and see him and his friends in their closing worship. They were led by one of their own number, who began by reading the burning words of Jesus most often quoted by Gandhi. They had never seemed more perfect nor more impossible nor more necessary than after these days together.

Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world. . . . Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. . . . Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

He then called attention to the conclusion of all their weekend thought: the great need of their country, their responsibility as patriots, and their still greater responsibility as Chris-

tians, not only for India, but for all the world. Then he read as a prayer a lovely bit from the pen of India's poet friend, Tagore:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;  
Where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;  
Where words come out from the depths of truth;  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way in the dreary desert sand of dead habit;  
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action—  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

And it was with a full heart that Dinabandhu and the other members of the Indian Christian Youth League joined that day in a simple prayer for their own country and for the Christian movement around the world, that the spirit of Christ the Lord, who went among men as a young man with flame in his heart and God in his life, might be in young India, making them able to forget themselves in his service, till the kingdom of God might truly be realized on earth, and men make a community of Christian brothers.

## APPENDIX

### *A BRIEF READING LIST*

THE following list suggests but a few of the many books that might be cited on the respective chapters in this volume. Fuller lists may be consulted in *The Church Takes Root in India*, by Basil Mathews, and *Moving Millions*, a symposium. Leaders of study classes using this book will wish to secure "A Course on India for Young People and Seniors," by Sue Weddell, available from denominational literature headquarters for twenty-five cents.

#### CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

*Gitanjali*. Rabindranath Tagore. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1914. \$2.00.

*India Reveals Herself*. Basil Mathews and Winifred Wilson. New York, Oxford University Press, 1937. \$2.50.

*India's Social Heritage*. L. S. S. O'Malley. New York, Oxford University Press, 1934. \$2.00.

*Land and Life of India, The*. Margaret Read. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1934. (Available from Missionary Education Movement, New York, 80 cents.)

*Legacy of India, The*. G. T. Garratt, editor. New York, Oxford University Press, 1937. \$4.00.

*Neighbour India: Changing Days in an Age-Old Land*. Agnes Rush Burr. New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1929. \$2.00.

*Oil Lamps Lifted*. Pearl Dorr Longley. New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1935. \$1.00.

#### CHAPTERS TWO, THREE, AND FOUR: HISTORY

*Ancient and Medieval History*. Carlton J. H. Hayes and Parker T. Moon. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1929. \$2.20.

*Cambridge Shorter History of India.* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1934. 3 parts in 1 volume. \$4.00.

*Oxford Student's History of India.* 13th ed. Vincent A. Smith. New York, Oxford University Press, 1931. \$1.35.

*Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India.* Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1934. \$7.50.

#### CHAPTER FIVE: INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

*Autobiography, with Musings on Recent Events in India.* Jawaharlal Nehru. London, John Lane, 1936. 15/-.

*Contemporary Thought of India.* Alfred C. Underwood. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1931. (Out of print.)

*Dawn in India.* Sir Francis Younghusband. New York, Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1931. \$3.50.

*Gandhi: The Dawn of Indian Freedom.* John C. Winslow and Verrier Elwin. New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1931. \$1.50.

*India and Britain, a Moral Challenge.* C. F. Andrews. London, Student Christian Movement Press, 1937. Cheaper ed. 2/6.

*India, Peace or War?* C. S. Ranga Iyer. London, George H. Harrap, 1930. 7/6.

*Indian Administration.* G. N. Joshi. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1937. \$2.25.

*India's New Constitution.* J. P. Eddy and F. H. Lawton. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1935. \$2.10.

*Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas, Including Selections from His Writings.* C. F. Andrews. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1930. \$3.00.

#### CHAPTER SIX: RURAL LIFE

*Behind Mud Walls.* William H. and Charlotte V. Wiser. New York, Richard R. Smith, 1930. \$1.50. (Available from Harper & Brothers.)

*Christian Education in the Villages of India.* Alice B. Van Doren. New York, International Missionary Council, 1931. 80 cents.

- Christian Mission in Rural India, The.* Kenyon L. Butterfield.  
 New York, International Missionary Council, 1930. 80 cents.  
*Up from Poverty in Rural India.* D. Spencer Hatch. 3rd ed. New  
 York, Oxford University Press, 1936. \$1.50.

#### CHAPTER SEVEN: HOME LIFE

- Freedom.* Welthy Honsinger Fisher. New York, Friendship Press,  
 1930. Cloth, 75 cents; paper, 25 cents.  
*Himself: The Autobiography of a Hindu Lady.* Katherine V.  
 Gates. New York, Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.00. (To be pub-  
 lished in September, 1938.)  
*India Looks to Her Future.* Oscar MacMillan Buck. New York,  
 Friendship Press, 1930. Cloth, 50 cents; paper, 25 cents. (See  
 Chapter V, The Indian Home.)  
*Key of Progress, The: A Survey of the Status and Conditions of  
 Women in India.* A. R. Caton, editor. New York, Oxford Uni-  
 versity Press, 1930. \$2.50.  
*My Brother's Face.* Dhan Gopal Mukerji. London, Thornton But-  
 terworth, Ltd., 1935. 5/-.  
*Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati.* Clementina Butler. New York, Flem-  
 ing H. Revell Co., 1922. (Out of print.)

#### CHAPTER EIGHT: SCHOOL AND CITY

- Christian College in India, The: Report of the Commission on  
 Christian Higher Education in India.* New York, Oxford Uni-  
 versity Press, 1931. \$2.00.  
*India.* Flora Annie Steel. Illustrated by Mortimer Menpes. New  
 York, The Macmillan Co. \$2.50.  
*Indian Nationalism and the Christian Colleges.* P. J. Braisted.  
 New York, Association Press, 1935. \$2.00.  
*Indian Peasant Uprooted, The.* Margaret Read. New York, Long-  
 mans, Green & Co., 1931. \$2.50.  
*New Schools for Young India.* William J. McKee. Chapel Hill,  
 University of North Carolina Press, 1930. \$4.50.

## CHAPTERS NINE AND TEN: HINDUISM AND ISLAM

- Bhagavad Gita, The.* Translated by A. W. Ryder. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1929. \$2.00.
- Indian Islam.* Murray T. Titus. Religious Quest of India Series. New York, Oxford University Press, 1930. \$4.50.
- Insights into Modern Hinduism.* Hervey deW. Griswold. New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1934. \$2.00.
- Living Religions of the Indian People, The.* Nicol Macnicol. London, Student Christian Movement Press, 1934. (Available from Missionary Education Movement, New York, \$3.50.)
- Hindu Scriptures.* Nicol Macnicol, editor. Introduction by Rabindranath Tagore. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1938. 90 cents. (Everyman's Library.)
- Modern Religious Movements in India.* J. N. Farquhar. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1915. (Out of print.)
- "*Our Asiatic Christ.*" Oscar MacMillan Buck. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1927. \$1.50.
- Treasure-house of the Living Religions; Selections from Their Sacred Scriptures.* Robert E. Hume, compiler and editor. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932. \$3.00.

## CHAPTERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE: CHRISTIANITY

- All in the Day's Work.* Godfrey E. Phillips. New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1929. 50 cents.
- Builders of the Indian Church.* Stephen Neill. London, Edinburgh House Press, 1934. (Available from Missionary Education Movement, New York, 80 cents.)
- Christ of the Indian Road.* E. Stanley Jones. New York, Abingdon Press, 1925. \$1.00.
- Christ's Way to India's Heart.* J. Waskom Pickett. Lucknow, Lucknow Publishing House, 1937. (Available from Missionary Education Movement, New York, 50 cents.)

- Christian Mass Movements in India.* J. Waskom Pickett. New York, Abingdon Press, 1933. (Available from International Missionary Council, New York, \$1.00.)
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TABLES

I. AREA AND POPULATION OF BRITISH INDIA AND INDIAN STATES  
*(Compiled from the All-India Census Report, 1931)*

PROVINCES AND STATES	AREA IN SQUARE MILES	POPULATION		
		URBAN	RURAL	TOTAL
<b>PROVINCES:</b>				
Ajmer-Merwara .....	2,711	180,199	380,093	560,292
Andamans and Nicobars .....	3,143	.....	29,463	29,463
Assam .....	55,014	21,342	8,408,830	8,622,251
Baluchistan .....	54,228	92,025	371,483	463,508
Bengal .....	77,521	3,684,330	46,429,672	50,114,002
Bihar and Orissa <sup>1</sup> .....	83,954	1,653,837	36,023,739	37,677,576
Bombay Presidency (including Aden and Sind <sup>2</sup> ) .....	123,679	4,953,363	16,977,238	21,930,601
Burma <sup>3</sup> .....	233,492	1,520,937	13,147,109	14,667,146
Central Provinces and Berar .....	99,920	1,688,470	13,819,253	15,507,723
Coorg .....	1,593	9,827	153,500	163,327
Delhi .....	573	447,442	188,804	636,246
Madras .....	142,277	6,337,256	40,402,851	46,740,107
Northwest Frontier Province .....	13,518	386,177	2,038,899	2,425,076
Punjab .....	99,200	3,067,464	20,513,388	23,580,852
United Provinces of Agra and Oudh .....	106,248	5,424,621	42,984,142	48,408,763
Total, British Territory .....	1,096,171	29,658,469	241,868,464	271,526,933

## STATES:

Baluchistan States .....	80,410	10,577	394,532	405,109
Baroda State .....	8,164	523,003	1,920,004	2,443,007
Bihar and Orissa States .....	28,648	45,715	4,606,292	4,652,007
Bombay States .....	27,994	607,463	3,860,933	4,468,396
Central India States .....	51,597	677,670	5,955,120	6,632,790
Central Provinces States .....	31,175	75,065	2,408,149	2,483,214
Cochin State .....	1,480	206,340	998,676	1,205,016
Gwalior State .....	26,367	395,399	3,127,761	3,523,070
Hyderabad State .....	82,698	1,616,981	12,819,167	14,436,148
Jammu and Kashmir State .....	84,516	342,314	3,303,929	3,646,243
Mysore State .....	29,326	1,945,042	5,512,260	6,557,302
Punjab States Agency .....	31,241	439,451	4,032,767	4,472,218
Rajputana States .....	129,059	1,556,305	9,669,407	11,225,712
Travancore State .....	7,625	551,788	4,554,185	5,095,973
United Provinces States .....	5,943	126,138	1,079,932	1,206,070
Western India States Agency .....	35,442	883,776	3,115,474	3,999,250
Other States and Agencies .....	50,823	224,021	4,212,046	4,436,067
Total, Indian States .....	712,508	9,326,958	71,983,887	81,310,845
Grand Total, India .....	1,808,679	38,985,427	313,852,351	352,837,778

<sup>1</sup> Orissa was constituted a separate province with Cuttack as capital on April 1, 1936.  
<sup>2</sup> On April 1, 1936, Sind was constituted a separate province with Karachi as its capital. Aden was made a crown colony on April 1, 1937.

<sup>3</sup> On April 1, 1937, Burma was separated from India.

## II. LITERACY<sup>1</sup>

NUMBERS PER THOUSAND WHO ARE LITERATE FOR ALL AGES, FIVE AND OVER

RELIGION	1931				1921				1911			
	PERSONS		FEMALES		PERSONS		MALES		PERSONS		MALES	
	PERSONS	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	PERSONS	MALES	MALES	FEMALES	PERSONS	MALES	PERSONS	MALES
All Religions	95	156	29	82	139	21	69	122	12	116	116	12
Hindu	84	144	21	75	130	16	64	116	9	121	121	16
Sikh	91	138	29	68	107	16	77	121	5	80	80	5
Moslem	64	107	15	53	93	9	44	122	159	253	339	159
Christian	279	352	203	285	355	210	253	339	159	339	339	159

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Statesman's Year-Book*, 1935, p. 126. London, Macmillan and Co., 1935.

### III. POPULATION BY RELIGION<sup>1</sup>

#### INDIA AND BURMA

	1921 Census	1931 Census	Increase or Decrease
Hindu (Total)	216,734,586	239,195,140	+10.4
Moslem	68,735,233	77,677,545	+13
Buddhist	11,571,268	12,786,806	+10.5
Sikh	3,238,803	4,335,771	+33.9
Primitive Religions	9,774,611	8,280,347	-15.3
Christian	4,754,064	6,296,763	+32.5
Jain	1,178,596	1,252,105	+ 6.2
Zoroastrian	101,778	109,752	+ 7.8
Jews	21,778	24,141	+10.9
Unreturned	.....	2,879,438	....
Total	316,128,721	352,837,778	+10.6

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Directory of Christian Missions and Churches in India, Burma and Ceylon, 1936-1937*, p. 36.

### IV. DISTRIBUTION OF HINDU COMMUNITY<sup>1</sup>

Brahmans	15,237,452
Caste Hindus	171,190,624
Non-caste Hindus (Depressed Classes)	52,194,526
Undetermined	572,538
Total	239,195,140

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *Directory of Christian Missions and Churches in India, Burma and Ceylon, 1936-1937*, p. 39.

### V. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>

	Institutions	Students
Elementary Schools	13,274	609,821
Secondary Schools	302	67,229
Colleges	31	11,163
Theological Schools	25	556
Bible Training Schools	74	2,855
Teacher Training Schools	63	3,153

<sup>1</sup> Figures furnished by the International Missionary Council on the basis of reports of 1935-1936.

## GLOSSARY

**NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION:** As a general rule it may be said that in the Indian languages the vowels are pronounced in the Italian manner rather than the English: i.e., like the vowels in *do, re, mi, fa* of the musical scale. For example, whenever an *a* appears, the reader will know that it generally carries the sound of *a* in *father*. There is also a short *a* often found at the close of a word and sometimes elsewhere, which is pronounced like the *a* in *aboard*. Indian languages have no flat *a* as in *at*. The *u* is pronounced like the *ou* in *soup*. As to consonants, *j* is usually soft; *g* hard. Many Indian words have an aspirated letter usually rendered as *bh, dh, th*, etc., and given an explosive pronunciation like the *bh* in *abhor*. Strong accent upon one or more syllables of a word is not so common in the Indian languages as in English. Each syllable is given very nearly the same weight. In this book spellings have been used which give as nearly as possible the equivalent sounds in English. In the case of important exceptions, or when other problems are presented, the list here given supplies a phonetic form. For place names, a pronouncing gazetteer should be consulted.

**ASHRAM.** A center for spiritual fellowship, teaching, and service.

**BHAJAN.** A lyric of the Hindu type.

**BURKA.** A loose, all-enveloping garment worn by Moslem women.

**CHAPATI.** A flat, unleavened bread.

**CHARKA.** An Indian spinningwheel.

**CHARPOY.** A bed.

**CHAWL.** A city tenement.

**DARL.** Parched grain.

**DHOBI.** A washerman.

**DHOTI.** A long strip of cloth worn by men in many parts of India as a garment for the lower part of the body.

- DURBAR. A state ceremony.
- GHAT. Literally, step; also used for coastal mountain ranges.
- GHI. Clarified butter.
- GOPURAMS. High towers of Hindu temples of South India.
- GURU. A teacher or a Hindu religious leader to whom one gives discipleship.
- JAI. An exclamation equivalent to "Hail!"
- KARMA. Theory of destiny based on acts in previous existences.
- KHADDAR. Homespun cotton cloth.
- KIRTAN. A singing procession.
- MA-BAP. Literally, father and mother.
- MELA. A Hindu religious gathering; also used for festival or fair.
- NIRVANA. A term used in Buddhist teaching especially to define a state of beatitude or absence of desire.
- PANCHAYAT. A council of five.
- POMELO. A fruit.
- PUJA. Hindu worship.
- PUNDIT. A Hindu scholar; also a title of respect.
- PURDAH. Literally, a curtain; used generally for the practice of the seclusion of women.
- RAJ. Rule.
- SADHU. A Hindu ascetic or holy man.
- SAMAJ. A society.
- SANNYASI. A Hindu religious mendicant.
- SARI. A draped garment worn by women throughout India.
- SATYAGRAHA. Love-truth-force.
- SWADESHI. Literally, own country; in other words, Indian-made.
- SWAMI. A Hindu title for a religious leader.
- SWARAJ. Self-rule or home rule.
- TONGA. A two-wheeled cart with front and rear seats back to back.
- YOGA. A Hindu system of physical and mental discipline.
- ZAMINDAR. A hereditary land-holder.

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